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AUSTRALIAN AND BRITISH SOCCER WEEKLY

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BRAZIL TO BOUNCE BACK AT BLANCO?

By John Economos

RAUL BLANCO, coach of Australia's high-flying Olympic Soccer team, is far from confident for tonight's (Tuesday) return clash against the Brazilian Olympic team in Adelaide at the Hindmarsh Stadium.

Despite Australia's brilliant, if not magnificent performance witnessed last Saturday night in Sydney, where Australia destroyed Brazil 2-1, Blanco's vast international experience tells him that the badly stung South Americans will come out guns blazing and fighting to immediately restore honour and prestige to the Gold and Sky Blue of Brazil.

"They are hurt. Very hurt make no mistake and will be far more dangerous," warned Australia's coach last night from the Australian camp in Adelaide.

"They have rested and will be far stronger and a totally different enemy for us as we meet for the second time.

"Brazil will demand urgent revenge and we must be prepared for the fierce battle they already have planned," he emphasised.

Although reluctant to change a winning combination, Blanco's intelligence will force him to make two, possibly three, changes for tonight's 'Battle In Adelaide'.

"We must retain the pressure on Brazil that we inflicted on them in Sydney last Saturday night.

"There were times we squandered possession in the first game and we have worked on it since arriving here in Adelaide.

"But if we continue to relinquish such valuable possession, Brazil this time will severely punish us.

"We did not allow them to service their strikers as we applied sustained pressure to their midfield.

"I could make a change in the strike-line as Archie Thompson missed the Sydney match because he suffered a strain at training to the calf area.

"If he's fit I will play him. Two games in four days against Brazil and the recovery aspect is vitally important to monitor. I'll see how the lads are looking at training.

"There is also a chance I will be making a change in the midfield as I really think I must play as many players as I can now.

"I must determine their individual ability at international level now.

"The job we are doing now is not for today, but for Sydney 2000, you must not forget.

"But, of course, I want another win however I must thoroughly explore my entire Olympic squad members now," ended Blanco.

Australia's outstanding central marker and Carlton's sweeper Simon Colosimo is almost certain to start again.

The former AIS athlete had a magnificent game in Sydney, displaying total unyielding marking against Brazil's attack-line.

Melbourne Knights goalkeeper Joe Didulica could make Australia's starting line-up tonight as Blanco dearly desires to watch this custodian under international action.

Adrian Santrac, Adelaide Sharks coach, was drafted into Australia's training camp as Blanco's assistant for the remaining two matches, against Brazil tonight and in Perth on Saturday night.

Scheinflug Announces Australia's Under 17 squad

LES SCHEINFLUG, Australia's Under 17 coach named his squad of 24 players that yesterday (Monday) was drafted into a six-day training camp in Adelaide.

South Australia contributed five squad members, the highest number of representatives at Under 17 level for that state, the same number of players as did Victoria.

NSW dominated the squad by supplying no less than 11 of the 24.

Australia's Under 17s will play two key matches this week against the touring Japan Under 17s, the first as a curtain raiser tonight (Tuesday) to the major fixture of Australia v Brazil at the remodelled Hindmarsh Stadium in the Olyroo Challenge.

Scheinflug's young internationals will have their second hit-out against the Japanese this Friday at 5pm, also at the Hindmarsh Stadium.

The 24-man squad is:

BRAIN, Louie	SA	HARTGE, Gavin	NSW
FYFE, Iain	SA	KENDALL van STRATTAN, Jess	NSW
GOULDING, Aaron	SA	LOCKHART, Shane	NSW
MILOSEVIC, Matthew	SA	MACALISTER, Dylan	NSW
PANTELIS, Lucas	SA	McMASTER, Jamie	NSW
NORTH, Jade	Qld	MARTIN, Tallan	NSW
SHIRIPPA, Joseph	Central NSW	WHALAN, Scott	NSW
GRIFFITH, Adam	Central NSW	DiLORIO, Joe	Vic
CANDSDELL-SHERRIFF, Shane	NSW	KENNEDY, Joshua	Vic
DOUMANIS, Anthony	NSW	LAURIE, Steve	Vic
GROVES, Bradley	NSW	LETTIERI, Fabian	Vic
BYRNES, Mark	NSW	OVCIN, Boris	Vic

Raul Blanco (left) with Australian captain Brett Emerton.

Brazilian coach Toninho Barroso.

Brazil's captain and 'screener' Rodrigo 'Rusty' Ramos. See Page 5 for ABSW's exclusive interview.

Editorial

'La critique est aisee mais l'art est difficile'

(To criticise is easy, but the art is diffcult)

So wrote Stephen Sassinis last week, an old French proverb which stands as potent a statement today as it ever did.

The term was used in a letter that mentioned an ABSW correspondent. The letter was also full of support for David Hill, and why not?

David Hill has done more for Soccer in Australia, during his short tenure in control of the governing body, than most have done in twenty years involvement with the game.

Hill has never been one to shy away from radical change, even to the extent of putting a few noses out of joint with clubs, officials and more than one supporter, however, the facts speak for themselves: Soccer has never been in the news more often in the last twenty years, the sport has never been more widely followed than now, it has never reached the consciousness of the so called 'mainstream Australian public' like it has recently.

Argue your life away if you will, but is it mere coincidence that all of this has transpired since Hill took over?

I think not.

The point of the letter, I believe, was that we all can be smart with hindsight, it's giving the scenario, the possibilities etc. before it takes place that separates the men from the boys or, more appropriately in this day and age, the parents from the children perhaps?

In defence of the journalist concerned, he did mention many times in the weeks leading up to the fateful meeting of Iran that we would meet them, unlike the rest of the print media who had already pencilled in another team.

The ABSW writer in question was correct. Fact.

The letter referred to was quite superbly written, raised many topics for discussion and is more than worthy of an answer in this column, which I am attempting, poorly, to do.

David Hill has worked wonders: Australia jumped twenty places in the world rankings, enticed Terry Venables to become coach, raised the expectation of supporters and, with the introduction of Perth Glory, attendances have improved.

The standard of play has also increased. If it hadn't, why would so much of our playing talent now be gracing the football fields of Europe?

Yes, David Hill has done a grand job, but there is, as ever, one small drawback. Too many times Soccer Australia have been in the news for the wrong reasons. Court cases, friction with clubs and officials, threatened expulsions etc..

Another problem has been the agenda of the governing body. Without the obvious answer of working for the good of the game, what is it? With the negative publicity it has received, in almost equal measure to the positive, can this be seen as a great stride forward?

I am a supporter of David Hill. I'd like nothing better than to have seen Australia in France and am firmly of the opinion that Eddie Thomson took the national side as far as he could and that it was time for a new man to take the team that extra step. As things turned out, it didn't happen this time but can anyone honestly say that Venables was the wrong man for the job?

Terry Venables

As with my thoughts on that, perhaps the time has come when we might register that Hill has reached the 'Thomson area', but do not think for one moment that I want David Hill out of office.

I too believe he has done remarkably well in so short a space of time, but the time, if ever there was one, has arrived when soccer in Australia must consolidate and then go forward.

Sadly, once again, the greatest marketing opportunity passed us by with the Rugby League fiasco. Soccer didn't capitalise; AFL did.

'To criticise is easy, but the art is difficult' is a powerful statement, and one used in absolutely the right context by Mr Sassinis. A well thought out letter, an eloquent missive and one we were extremely happy to receive. So long as we have letter writers of this calibre, the game cannot fail to go forward, as the heart and soul of the sport is encapsulated in his comments.

None of us are beyond criticism, we cannot always be right. We are, after all, mere mortals in the rich and diverse cultural tapestry that makes football, and life here in Australia, a pleasure to be involved with.

If there is one point I would like to add, it is this: We are not always right, we do make mistakes, but when we do, we at least put up our hand and say so. We don't attempt to sweep it under the carpet or to gloss over it and we are big enough to accept the blame and are never afraid to say: "you were right, I was wrong."

Unlike some, perhaps?

Micky Brock

Don't forget the great Olyroo v Brazil matches tonight and Saturday. If you can't get along to the games, SBS (as ever), will be showing them at the following times:

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11.00pm - 1.10am
(Perth)

As always get out to the ground and cheer the boys on if you can.

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FRENCHS FOREST	–	The Forest High School, Frenchs Forest Road, Frenchs Forest
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ILLAWONG	–	Menai High School, Gerald Road, Illawong
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THE OLYROOO CHALLENGE

AUSTRALIA'S BRILLIANCE BLAZES BRAZIL

By John Economos

AN AUSTRALIAN Olympic team, extremely well balanced, totally disciplined, mobile, determined and tactically well-prepared, proved far too much to handle, defeating Brazil 2-1 last Saturday night in front of a healthy and colourful crowd of 20,067 at Sydney's Parramatta Stadium.

Goals by newly-elected skipper Brett Emerton very early in the first session plus another in the 69th minute by second-half substitute striker Michael Curcija destroyed a somewhat shocked Brazil, who already have been tagged as favourites for a gold medal in Sydney's 2000 Olympics.

So devastating, so unyielding was Australia's performance against the world's most illustrious Soccer nation, that the Brazilians were thrown into total frustration and almost disarray, questioning just what they had to do to break down that 'Vegemite-Vigour' so well recognised internationally in sporting arenas around the world.

Here one must salute the industrious and meticulous input by Australia's coach Raul Blanco, who magnificently moulded this young team, despite the mid-week frustrations inflicted upon him by European clubs blocking the return of some of his star players.

Blanco's 'cocktail' of styles, qualities and above all his tactical preparation, not to mention his excellent timely rotation in making his substitutions to sustain pressure on the South Americans, was of outstanding quality.

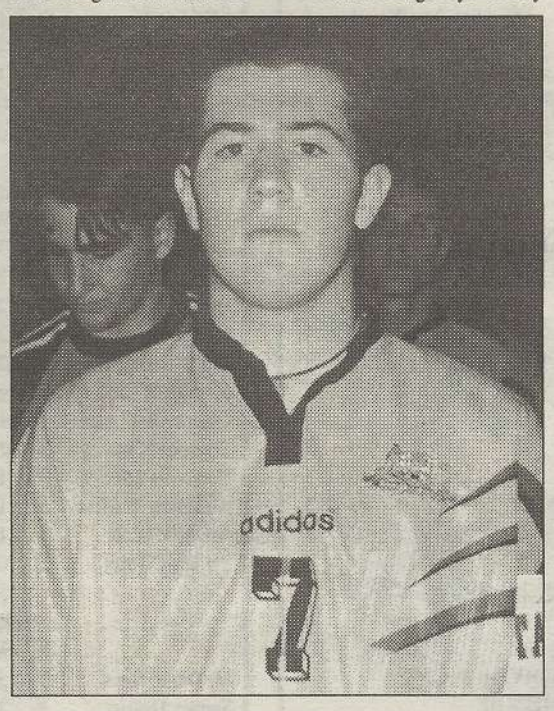
Blanco kicked off with a 5-3-2 formation, but from the moment Australia hit the front again in the second-half, he swiftly switched to an aggressive 4-5-1 to choke Brazil in the middle of the pitch and cement Australia's lead to the very end.

Australia had numerous star performers. In fact about the only 'non-performer' — if one is permitted to call him that — was goalkeeper Danny Milosevic who thankfully had very little to do but make one valuable save.

Skipper and right wingback Brett Emerton was powerful in his raids and defensive work, and he cracked Brazil's defence with a world class header very early in the match whilst giant central marker Simon Colosimo was 'BHP' steel tough at the back, forging himself as a definite future and senior international for the Green and Gold.

Australia's highly industrious starting midfield trio of Billy Damianos, Vince Grella and Nick Rizzo were mobile, aggressive and savagely pressured Brazil off the ball. Grella, in fact, was was dynamite and Rizzo's visionary passing stretched Brazil's lines.

Australia's skilled strike-combination of giant Clayton Zane alongside diminutive 16-year-old Nick Carle was explosive and tenacious, repeatedly piercing Brazil's back men.



Brett Emerton: Captained his country superbly.

The lanky Zane, in fact, was most unlucky not to have scored as well and to have earnt Australia a penalty in the dying seconds of the first session when he was first fouled inches outside Brazil's box. He was then grabbed and held back inside the box by the same offending defender, sweeper Fernando Santos.

Santos was the last man and was most fortunate not to have seen Simon Micallef's red card.

In the seventh minute the stadium exploded with delirium as Australia hit the front following a well-struck corner from the left by midfielder Damianos.

With ruthlessly timed efficiency, Emerton on the back stick climbed a half body length above the Brazilian defence, hung in the air, then recoiled his neck muscles to unleash a crashing header that ripped into the target.

It was nothing short of a world class aerial goal.

On the half hour mark a Rizzo cross saw Damianos clobber a downward drive that lifted towards the target where Brazil's goalie Fabio barely was able to tip it around the corner.

Sixty seconds later Brazil 'balanced the books' through their galloping midfielder Eriberto. Racing infield he let fly a lethal left footed low drive that flashed into the corner of the target.

The pace of the match was so furious one could not help wondering that the side that wilted first would lose this spectacular war.

This is where Australia's sustained power shocked the Brazilians, the crowd plus all televsion viewers.

Blanco's eagle-eye closely monitored the energy levels of his solidiers and with precision timing made his four substitutions to bring on fresh legs, thus sustaining immense, unbearable pressure on the by-now jading Brazil.

The block-busting Emerton crashed his way through two Brazilian defenders in the 52nd minute but his final shot cannoned off the base of the right post.

In the 68th minute Brazil's sweeper Santos was most fortunate to again escape a red card when he scythed down a dazzling Rizzo 10 metres outside the box.

From the ensuing well taken free-kick by Grella, substitute Curcija climbed high in front and carefully side-foot volleyed into the target, sending Australia hurtling towards victory and the whole Stadium electrified into hysterical jubilation.

This was a match that no lover of international Soccer should have missed.

POST-MATCH INTERVIEWS

Australia's debutante skipper, Brett Emerton, facing his first ever press conference, quietly remarked: "To be made captain, score and win against Brazil was an incredible honour as well as a bonus. Being Brazil I always expected to be surprised by something from them, but we played very well and it was personally a great lift."

Meanwhile Brazil's respectful coach, Toninho Barroso, soundly acknowledged Australia's victory, stating: "It was a very good game and we had no idea how well Australia would play which has many quality players to make a very good national team for the next Olympics. We lost two players through injury and having arrived only three days before this match it affected us, but I hope for our next game (tonight Tuesday) Brazil will be stronger and better. We conceded a very early goal which we shouldn't have through an individual mistake which again shouldn't have happened," concluded Brazil's master coach.

Super-sub ... Michael Curcija.

An extremely cool, very humble but totally cautious Australian coach, Raul Blanco, reflected: "Obviously I'm very happy with the result, but there is still a big job ahead that has to be done for us to get even better. We were solid and aggressive collectively and only Australian Soccer can benefit from this and the crowd was just fantastic.

"There was a great response to Australia's Olympic team which had many good performers tonight with Simon Colosimo one of the pick players.

"For Tuesday's game I will have to wait and see how everyone will recover as I must give a chance to others in my squad to see just what they can offer as well."

AUSTRALIA: Milosevic: Emerton, Blatsis, Bove, Colosimo, Burns: Damianos (J. Culina 57), Grella, Rizzo (Nastevski 86): Zane (Care 78), N.Carle (Curcija 57).

BRAZIL: Fabio: Rodrigo, Santos, Gustavo: Alvim, Matuzalem, Fernando, Ramos, Eriberto (Rocha 84): Antonio (Edu 46), Gaviao (Thiago 65).

SCORERS

AUSTRALIA: Emerton 7, Curcija 69

BRAZIL: Eriberto 31.

REFEREE: S.Micallef.

CROWD: 20,067.

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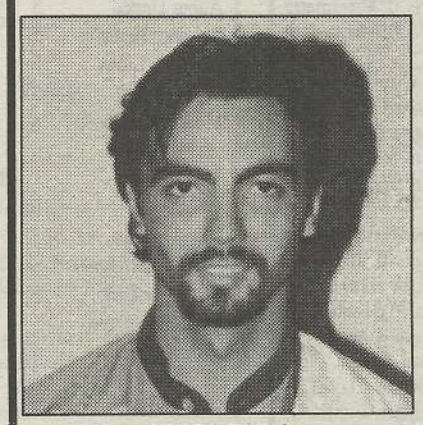

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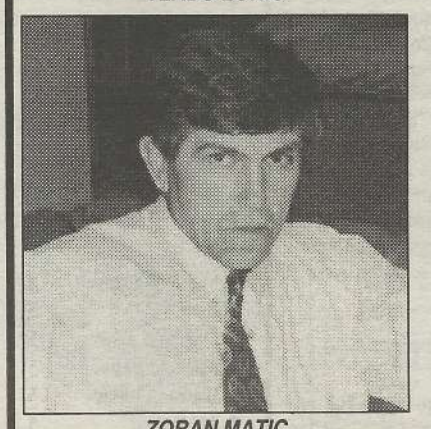

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NSW STATE LEAGUES

NSW SOCCER FEDERATION:

Super League: First Grade:Bonnyrigg WE 4 (P Richardson 5, M Hoenselaars 36, J Mancino 73, D Harding 90) Blacktown City 2 (S Cutler 31, S Cleary 74); Sutherland Shire 1 (J McCleary 14) Central Coast 0; Leichhardt Tigers 2 (J Buonavoglia 65,83) Parramatta Eagles 0; Eastern Suburbs 4 (Y Ekinci 5, J Melissourgos 56, S Mutton 66,77) St George Saints 1 (J Pillemer 41); Canterbury Berries 4 (A Markopoulos 17,81 J Nikas 19, 90og) Bankstown City 2 (S Eagleton 25, P Bentvelzen 32m).

U-21: Bonnyrigg WE 6 Blacktown City 1; Macarthur Rams 1 Ryde City Gunners 0; Central Coast 2 Sutherland Shire 2; Parramatta Eagles 3 Leichhardt Tigers 2; St George Saints 1 Eastern Suburbs 0, Canterbury Berries 3 Bankstown City 1.

U-18: Blacktown City 2 Bonnyrigg WE 1; Macarthur Rams 2 Ryde City Gunners 0; Central Coast 2 Sutherland Shire 0; Parramatta Eagles 7 Leichhardt Tigers 0; St George Saints 2 Eastern Suburbs 1; Bankstown City 4 Canterbury Berries 0.

DIV 1: First Grade: Moorebank Sports Hills United N/P, Penrith Panthers 1 (5og) Stanmore Hawks 0; Illawarra Lions 5 (M Borg 1 56, D Tosevski 23,75 R Trajcevski 40) Belmore Hercules 0, Fairfield Bulls 1 (S Talevski 30) AC United 0; Bathurst 75 1 (M Rooke 5) drew Auburn United 1 (D Orlanda 55); Manly Warringah 3 (T Krslovic 53 D Townsend 83 H Elkhansa 86) Rockdale City Suns 0; Hurstville City 4 (P Papouthis 1, T Pontidas 25,31, M Nandreou 68) MT Pritchard 1 (N Markouski 9).

U21: Penrith Panthers 2 Stanmore Hawks 1; Belmore Hercules 4 Illawarra Lions 0; Hills United 4 Moorebanks Sports 1; AC United 4 Fairfield Bulls 2; Bathurst 75 1 Auburn United 0; Manly Warringah 5 Rockdale City Suns 1; Hurstville City 3 MT Pritchard 1.

U18: Moorebank Sports 1 Hills Utd 1; Stanmore Hawks 2 Penrith Panthers 1; Illawarra Lions 4 Belmore Hercules 0; AC United 1 Fairfield Bulls 1; Bathurst 75 7 Auburn United 2; Manly Warringah 1 Rockdale City Suns 0; Mt Pritchard 3 Hurstville City 0.

DIV 2: First Grade: Hadjuk Wanderers 1 Gladesville United 1; Hurstville Zsc 2 Uni of NSW 0; Greystanes 2 Sydney District 1; Alexander Warriors 5 Parramatta City 1; Mt Druitt Town 3 Liverpool City 2; Dulwich Hill 3 Arncliff Scots 1.

U-21: Hadjuk Wanderers 6 Gladesville United 1; Hurstville ZSC 1 Uni of Nsw 0; Greystanes 1 Sydney District 0; Parramatta City 5 Alexander Warriors 1; MT Druitt Town 3 Liverpool City 0; Dulwich Hill 8 Arncliff Scots 1.

U-18: Hadjuk Wanderers 2 Gladesville United 1; Hurstville ZSC 1 Uni of NSW 0; Sydney District 1 Greystanes 0; Parramatta City 13 Alexander Warriors 0; MT Druitt Town 1 Liverpool City 0; Dulwich Hill 15 Arncliff Scots 0.

DIV 3: First Grade: Sydney University 6 Granville Greenisland 0; Prospect United 4 Flamencos 2; Transandinos 3 Hakoah 2; ColoColo 5 White City 1; Camden Tigers 3 Maroubra United 2; Glebe Wanderers 3 Hawkesbury City 2.

Second Grade: Sydney University 3 Granville Greenisland 0; Prospect United 2 bt Flamencos 0, Transandinos 2 bt Hakoah 1, White City United 2 Colo Colo 2; Camden Tigers 3 Maroubra United 1; Glebe Wanderers 2 Hawkesbury City 0.

DIV 5: First Grade: Bossy 2 Liverpool Olympic 2; Eastern Creek Pioneers 2 Racing 1; White Valley 2 Sporting SCC 0; Liverpool Warriors 3 Auburn Star 2; Homentmen 5 Kosciusko 1.

Second Grade: Liverpool Olympic 2 Bossy 0; Eastern Creek Pioneers 5 Racing 3; Sporting SCC 3 White Valley 0; Auburn Star 3 Liverpool Warriors 1; Kosciusko 3 Homentmen 3.

WOMEN'S STATE LEAGUE:

Div 1: First Grade: Marconi Fairfield 3 Gladesville Ravens 1; Eastern Suburbs NSW Institute/Academy p/p; Sutherland Sharks 6 Moorebank Sports 0; NNSW Institute/Academy 4 NNSW Institute/Academy 1.

Second Grade: Gladesville Ravens 1 Marconi Fairfield 1; Eastern Suburbs NSW Institute/Academy p/p; Sutherland Sharks 10 Moorebank Sports 2; NNSW Institute/Academy 6 Penrith Panthers 0.

Div 2: Gladesville Ravens 2 Bankstown City 2; Shoalhaven Association 9 Sutherland Shire 2; Wollongong City 2 Bathurst City 2; Central Coast WSA 6 Roselands 2; St George Association 3 Manly Warringah 1.

SUPER YOUTH LEAGUE:

G13: Sutherland Shire 2 bt Blacktown City 0, Wollongong City 3 bt Eastern Suburbs 0, Manly Warringah 3 bt Sydney United 1, Sydney Olympic 4 bt Macarthur Rams 1, Gladesville Hornsby 3 bt Southern Districts 2, Parramatta Eagles 2 bt Leichhardt Tigers 0, Newcastle Breakers 5 bt Marconi Fairfield 1.

G14: Blacktown City 3 bt Sutherland Shire 1, Wollongong City 1 Eastern Suburbs 1, Sydney United 3 bt Manly Warringah 0, Sydney Olympic 1 bt Macarthur Rams 0, Southern Districts 5 bt Gladesville Hornsby 2, Parramatta Eagles 0 Leichhardt Tigers 0,Newcastle Breakers 1 bt Marconi Fairfield 0.

G15: Blacktown City 2 bt Sutherland Shire 0, Eastern Suburbs 2 bt Wollongong City 1, Sydney United 1 Manly Warringah 1, Sydney Olympic 7 bt Macarthur Rams 2, Gladesville Hornsby 1 bt Southern Districts 0, Parramatta Eagles 5 bt Leichhardt Tigers 1, Newcastle Breakers 3 bt Marconi Fairfield 1.

G16: Sutherland Shire 1 bt Blacktown City 0, Eastern Suburbs 1 bt Wollongong City 0, Sydney United 2 bt Manly Warringah 0, Macarthur Rams 0 bt Sydney Olympic 0, Gladesville Hornsby 1 bt Southern Districts 0, Parramatta Eagles5 bt Leichhardt Tigers 3, Newcastle Breakers 3 bt Marconi Fairfield 2.

DIV 1 YOUTH LEAGUE:

G13: St George 7 bt Rockdale City Suns 0, Illawarra Lions 1 Ryde City 1, Southern Branch 4 bt Bankstown Association 0, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 4 bt CSI Schofield 1, Canterbury Assn 2 bt Penrith Panthers 1, AC United 1 bt Blacktown Assn 0, Central Coast 4 bt Nepean Assn 1. G14: St George 3 bt Rockdale City Suns 0, Ryde City 5 bt Illawarra Lions 1, Bankstown Assn 0 Southern Branch 0, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 6 bt CSI Schofield 1, Penrith Panthers 2 bt Canterbury Assn 0, Blacktown Assn 2 AC United 2, Nepean Association 3 bt Central Coast 2.

G15: St George 3 bt Rockdale City Suns 2, Illawarra Lions 2 bt Ryde City 1, Southern Branch 2 bt Bankstown Assn 1, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 6 bt CSI Schofield 0, Canterbury Assn 6 bt Penrith Panthers 2, Blacktown Assn 1 bt AC United 0, Central Coast 4 bt Nepean Assn 0. G16: St George 4 bt Rockdale City Suns 1, Illawarra Lions 1 Ryde City 1, Bankstown Assn 4 bt Southern Branch 1, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 2 bt CSI Schofield 1, Penrith Panthers 2 Canterbury Assn 2, AC United 2 bt Blacktown Assn 0, Central Coast 4 bt Nepean Assn 1.

SUPER LEAGUE ROUND TWO

FIRST GRADE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Canterbury B	2	2	0	0	5	2	3	6
Macarthur	2	2	0	0	5	2	3	6
Bonnyrigg	2	1	1	0	6	4	2	4
Leichhardt	2	1	1	0	4	2	2	4
Easter Subs	2	1	0	1	4	3	1	3
Bankstown	2	1	0	1	4	4	0	3
Blacktown	2	1	0	1	4	4	0	3
Sutherland	2	1	0	1	1	1	0	3
Parramatta	2	1	0	1	2	3	-1	3
Central Coast	2	0	0	2	0	2	-2	0
Ryde City	2	0	0	2	2	6	-4	0
St George Saints	2	0	0	2	2	6	-4	0

GRADE 21

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Canterbury	2	2	0	0	9	2	7	6
Macarthur	2	2	0	0	5	1	4	6
Parramatta	2	2	0	0	5	3	2	6
Bonnyrigg	2	1	0	1	7	4	3	3
Leichhardt	2	1	0	1	5	4	1	3
Easter Subs	2	1	0	1	3	2	1	3
St George Saints	2	1	0	1	2	2	0	3
Ryde City	2	0	1	1	1	2	-1	1
Sutherland	2	0	1	1	3	6	-3	1
Centra Coast	2	0	1	1	3	8	-5	1
Blacktown	2	0	1	1	2	7	-5	1
Bankstown	2	0	0	2	2	6	-4	0

GRADE 18

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Parramatta	2	2	0	0	8	0	8	6
Macarthur	2	1	1	0	4	2	2	4
Bankstown	2	1	0	1	4	1	3	3
Central Coast	2	1	0	1	3	2	1	3
Blacktown	2	1	0	1	3	3	0	3
Eastern Subs	2	1	0	1	2	2	0	3
St George Saints	2	1	0	1	2	2	0	3
Ryde City	2	1	0	1	2	3	-1	3
Canterbury	2	1	0	1	2	5	-3	3
Leichhardt	2	1	0	1	4	9	-5	3
Sutherland	2	0	1	1	2	4	-2	1
Bonnyrigg	2	0	0	2	3	6	-3	0

FEDERATION DIVISION ONE

FIRST GRADE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Hurstville C	5	4	0	1	12	7	5	12
Penrith Panthers	5	4	0	1	7	4	3	12
Stanmore Hawks	5	3	0	2	11	7	4	9
Manly Warringah	5	3	0	2	10	6	4	9
Rockdal City	5	3	0	2	9	7	2	9
Bathurst'75	5	2	3	0	5	3	2	9
Fairfield Bulls	5	3	0	2	6	5	1	9
Hills United	4	2	0	2	6	9	-3	6
AC United	5	1	2	2	9	8	1	5
Aubur United	5	1	2	2	8	9	-1	5
Belmore Hercules	5	1	1	3	4	11	-7	4
Illawarra Lions	5	1	0	4	9	8	1	3
Mt Pritchard	5	1	0	4	6	14	-8	3
Moorebank Sports	4	0	2	2	3	7	-4	2

GRADE 21

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pt
Hills United	5	4	1	0	15	4	11	13
Manly Warringah	5	4	0	1	14	6	8	12
Hurstville City	5	4	0	1	10	7	3	12
Penrith Panthers	5	3	1	1	9	4	5	10
Fairfield Bulls	5	3	0	2	18	9	9	9
AC United	5	2	2	1	12	9	3	8
Bathurst'75	5	2	1	2	8	4	4	7
Moorebank Sports	5	1	3	1	6	8	-2	6
Auburn United	5	2	0	3	7	11	-4	6
Mt Pritchard	5	1	2	2	9	11	-2	5
Rockdale City	5	1	1	3	6	12	-6	4
Belmore Hercules	5	1	1	3	6	17	-11	4
Stanmore Hawks	5	1	0	4	5	11	-6	3
Illawarra Lions	5	0	0	5	2	14	-12	0

GRADE 18

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Manly Warringah	5	4	1	0	8	3	5	13
Bathurst'75	5	4	0	1	16	7	9	12
Stanmore Hawks	5	4	0	1	13	6	7	12
Fairfield Bulls	5	3	2	0	12	3	9	11
Illawarra Lions	5	3	1	1	18	7	11	10
AC United	5	3	1	1	10	6	4	10
Moorebank Sports	5	2	1	2	6	4	2	7
Mt Pritchard	5	2	0	3	12	10	2	6
Hills United	5	1	3	1	8	9	-1	6
Penrith Panthers	5	2	0	3	8	10	-2	6
Belmore Hercules	5	1	0	4	4	15	-11	3
Rockdale City	5	0	2	3	4	12	-8	2
Hurstville City	5	0	1	4	4	21	-17	1
Auburn United	5	0	0	5	6	16	-10	0

FEDERATION DIVISION TWO

FIRST GRADE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Dulwich Hill	3	3	0	0	13	1	12	9
Greystanes	3	3	0	0	7	4	3	9
Alexander Warriors	3	2	0	1	7	3	4	7
Sydney District	3	2	0	1	7	4	3	6
Hajduk Wanderers	3	1	2	0	6	3	3	5
Gladesville United	3	1	1	1	5	6	-1	4
Hurstville ZSC	3	1	1	1	3	4	-1	4
Mt Druitt Town	3	1	0	2	7	8	-1	3
Arncliffe Scots	3	1	0	2	2	4	-2	3
Liverpool City	3	1	0	2	3	10	-7	3
Parramatta City	3	0	0	3	3	9	-6	0
Uni Of NSW	3	0	0	3	2	9	-7	0

GRADE 21

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Dulwich Hill	3	3	0	0	13	3	10	9
Greystanes	3	2	0	1	6	1	5	6
Hajduk Wanderers	3	2	0	1	7	3	4	6
Mt Druitt Town	3	2	0	1	6	3	3	6
Uni of NSW	3	2	0	1	4	2	2	6
Parramatta City	3	1	1	1	5	6	-1	4
Gladesville United	3	1	1	1	3	7	-4	4
Liverpool City	3	1	0	2	7	5	2	3
Hurstville ZSC	3	1	0	2	3	4	-1	3
Alexander Warriors	3	1	0	2	4	8	-4	3
Arncliffe Scots	3	1	0	2	2	15	-13	3
Sydney District	3	0	0	3	2	5	-3	0

GRADE 18

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Mt Druitt Town	3	3	0	0	15	0	15	9
Sydney District	3	2	1	0	5	1	4	7
Hajduk Wanderers	3	2	1	0	6	3	3	7
Hurstville ZSC	3	2	1	0	3	1	2	7
Dulwich Hill	3	1	1	1	16	2	14	4
Liverpool City	3	1	1	1	5	2	3	4
Gladesville United	3	1	1	1	4	4	0	4
Parramatta City	3	1	0	2	14	4	10	3
Greystanes	3	1	0	2	2	4	-2	3
Arncliffe Scots	3	1	0	2	3	19	-16	3
Uni of NSW	3	0	0	3	1	7	-6	0
Alexander Warriors	3	0	0	3	0	27	-27	0

NSW Soccer Federation

SUPER LEAGUE ROUND 3

Sunday 28th March

Sutherland Sharks v Bankstown City Lions

Seymour Shaw Park — 6.00pm

Bonnyrigg W.E. v Macarthur Rams

Serbian Centre — 6.00pm

Sunday 29th March

Parramatta Eagles v Blacktown City Demons

Melita Stadium — 7.00pm

St George Saints v Leichhardt Tigers

St George Stadium — 3.00pm

Ryde City Gunners v Central Coast

TG Millner Field — 3.00pm

Eastern Suburbs v Canterbury M/ville

Wentworth Park — 3.00pm

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'Rusty' — Brazil's Captain

By John Economos

RODRIGO LACERDA RAMOS, born October 6th 1980 and standing slim and tall (almost six feet), this powerfully built, but very quiet and most unassuming 17-year-old, could easily develop to star for Brazil at the 2002 World Cup Finals.

Remember the name-Ramos, for despite the fact he today is just 17, already he's the skipper of Brazil's Olympic team currently touring Australia.

Whilst most of his team-mates are all quite dark, this lad is rather of a light complexion, but has **Red** hair.

Red you may ask?

Through the team's ambassadorial translator and marketing representative for Brazil's sponsors, Nike, Mr Flavio Pinto, he introduced ABSW to the young Brazilian captain on board a luxury cruiser last week on Sydney's glorious Harbour.

"That's his real name in full, but in Brazil he's known as 'Ferregem' which I believe in your language means rust," Mr Pinto explained.

From that very moment ABSW labelled him 'Rusty' which Rodrigo seemed to like as he smiled at us.

Eight hours after the Brazilian Olympic team landed in Sydney for their three match series against Raul Blanco's Australian Olympic team, the young Brazilian squad was ushered down to the plush marinas wedged on the shores of Sydney's picturesque Harbour side suburb of Rushcutters Bay.

The reason?

As a kind and thoughtful gesture by the promoter of this series, former flamboyant stockbroker Rene Rivkin, he felt it would be appropriate to take the young Brazilian squad for dinner and a cruise around Sydney's world famous Harbour on board his luxurious $6 million vessel.

ABSW took 'Rusty' up front to the bow of the high-powered vessel as it effortlessly cut its way across the silky waters of Sydney Harbour for a quiet chat, well away from the invited media scrum.

'Rusty', understandably having just seen only 17 summers, the teenage athlete was at first not too comfortable talking to a Soccer journalist.

But within much less than 10 minutes, the young Brazilian skipper was very well at ease, eagerly answering questions, some personal, fired at him by ABSW.

Does he have a girlfriend?

"Yes of course I do. Her name is Luciene and she also is 17-years-old but is still a student at High School."

Marriage in your future plans?

"It's far too early as, of course, we are both far too young."

How big is your family?

"I have a brother and a sister."

Did you commence your professional career with your current club?

"No. It was back in 1993 and the club was Sao Bernardo. I stayed with them there for two full years before being bought by my current club S.E. Palmeiras."

Just recently this Brazilian team of yours played, I believe, in a tournament back in South America?

"Yes we did. But we just lost in the Final against Argentina 3-2."

At this tournament Rodrigo (now 'Rusty' to all Australians), was voted as 'Player Of The Series', as he was during the U/17 World Cup in Egypt last year, in which he also captained Brazil, to win the Cup Final when beating Ghana 2-1.

Do you have any special hobbies when you're away from Soccer?

"I love shopping and listening to music which relaxes me. The music I like is very similar to Samba. But I also like very much Celine Dion."

When you were young, I'll make that MUCH younger, did you have any idols in Soccer?

"Yes I did, and still have both of them as my idols — Dunga and Romario. In fact Dunga is my hero.

"Did you know that still today Dunga insists on having Romario as his room-mate when Brazil go into camps or travels overseas?"

No I didn't. But I do now. I myself have met both Dunga and Romario. Romario I met back in 1988 when he came here to Sydney with the Brazilian team for the 'Gold Cup'. He was totally unknown to the world then.

"Really."

Now you've seen our beautiful Sydney Harbour. what do you think of it?

"It's marvellous. It reminds me a little of Rio."

What's your favourite food?

"Prawns. Just like those we ate tonight. Beautiful."

You say you idolise Dunga, Brazil's skipper at the last Olympics and senior World Cup captain at the previous two World Cups. Will you try in your career to emulate his style of play as a midfielder which you are as well?

"No. I don't think I can. It's difficult for anyone to copy Dunga's style. He's excellent and I'm too young, too inexperienced to even be thinking I can copy him."

Would you like to leave Brazil and escalate your career in Europe in the future?

"Maybe yes. But I must make my name with Brazil, first."

What are your strengths in play?

"I think I'm OK with my ball control, distribution and defence work."

So that was our brief and pleasant chat during a cruise of glorious Sydney Harbour with Brazil's young Olympic captain, Rodrigo Lacerda ('Rusty') Ramos.

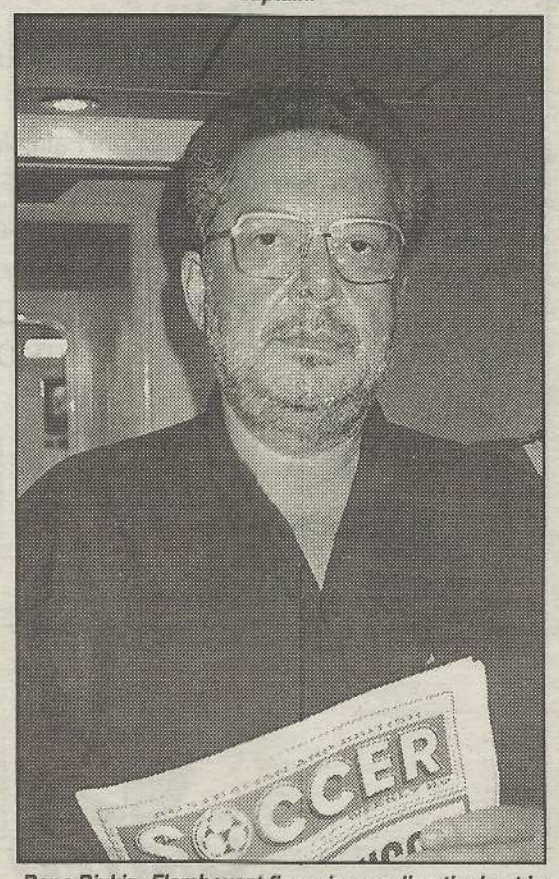
Before we end, right now, back in Brazil, inquiries already are being made by a giant European club for 'Rusty's' services.

Does ABSW know?

Can't say. But 'Rusty's' control of the Dutch language is not too good at the moment.

Remember Romario when he left Brazil to head for Europe?

Rodrigo Lacerda ('Rusty') Ramos: Brazil's Olympic captain.



Rene Rivkin: Flamboyant financier, reading the best in Soccer.

Brett Emerton
AUSTRALIA'S OLYMPIC STAR

Date Of Birth: February 22, 1979.
Birthplace: Sydney.
Previous Clubs: A.I.S.
Current Club: Sydney Olympic.
Current Position: Attacking right wingback.
Nickname: 'Emo'.
Occupation: Professional player.
Best Aspect Of Your Game: Taking players on.
Most Difficult Opponent: Paul Trimboli.
Most Impressive Local Player: Paul Trimboli.
Favourite Overseas Player: Ryan Giggs.
Favourite Overseas Club: Juventus.
What Qualities Make For A Good Coach: Must have the ability to be able to relate to all his players and know how to get the very best out of them.
Honours: NSW U/14s, U/15s, 16s, Australia's U/17s and Youth World Championships in Malaysia last year, Olympic team and National team.
Ambitions For 1998: To continue playing well for my club and Australia, especially in this current series against Brazil.
What Does It Mean To You To Play Against Brazil: Nothing is greater as they are the world's best and I will never forget it.
Most Memorable Moment: When we beat Argentina 4-3 last year in Malaysia during the World Youth Championships.
Hobbies Outside Soccer: Relaxing watching other sports.
Best Goal You've Seen Scored: Roberto Carlos' fabulous free-kick for Brazil against France.
Favourite Food: Anything really.
Favourite Drink: Milk.
Car You Drive: Suzuki Swift.
Favourite TV Show: Seinfeld.
TV Show You Refuse To Watch: None really.
Favourite Movie: ShawShank Redemption.
Favourite Actor/Actress: None really.
Preferred Music: Dance.
Least Preferred Music: Heavy Metal.
Favourite Comedian: Jimoen.
Pet Hates: Smokers.
Person You Would Like To Meet: Pele.

By John Economos

Nick Rizzo
AUSTRALIA'S OLYMPIC STAR

Date Of Birth: June 9, 1979.
Birthplace: Sydney.
Previous Clubs: Southern & Eastern, Sydney Olympic.
Current Club: Liverpool, England.
Current Position: Attacking midfielder.
Nickname: 'Rizzler'.
Occupation: Professional player.
Best Aspect Of Your Game: Close ball-control.
Most Difficult Opponent: Steve McManaman.
Most Impressive Local Player: Steve McManaman.
Favourite Overseas Player: Gianfranco Zola.
Favourite Overseas Club: Juventus.
What Qualities Make For A Good Coach: Must have good skills in communication and be fully able to understand all his players.
Honours: Australia's U/17s in Ecuador at World Cup.
Ambitions For 1998: To play regularly in Liverpool's first team.
What Does It Mean To You To Play Against Brazil: A great honour to be chosen to again play for Australia.
Most Memorable Moment: Signing my first fully professional contract at Liverpool in September '96.
Hobbies Outside Soccer: Computer work.
Best Goal You've Seen Scored: Maradona's in 1986 World Cup against England.
Favourite Food: Pasta.
Favourite Drink: Lucozade.
Car You Drive: About to buy one soon-(BMW).
Favourite TV Show: Friends.
TV Show You Refuse To Watch: Eastenders.
Favourite Movie: Titanic.
Favourite Actor/Actress: Bill Murray.
Preferred Music: Techno.
Least Preferred Music: R'n'B.
Favourite Comedian: Andrew Dice Clay.
Pet Hates: Bludgers in Soccer.
Person You Would Like To Meet: Roberto Baggio.

By John Economos

Rising Stars

Round 23 Southern Division

Altona Magic Ritchie	0	South Melbourne Tragakis, Papadopoulos	2
Altona Magic	0	Bulleen Inter Kostadinovski	1
VIS Kennedy, Mustafa, Hulusi, Ovcin	4	Albury Wodonga	0
Heidelberg United	0	Carlton Maisano 4, Siveski 3, Pino 2, Trajkovski	10

(Match brought forward from Round 24)

South Melbourne Kasikakis	1	Gippsland Falcons Cheney, Halikias	2

South Melbourne Rockets v Melbourne Knights
(already played)
Bye: Bentleigh Greens

Tuesday 24 March
Bulleen Inter Kings v Melbourne Knights
(Match brought forward from Round 26)

Northern Division

UTS Oly Colts Seale 2	2	NSWIS Austin, Watkins Cavallaro	3
AIS Ferrante, Milicevic, Ergic, Onoforo	4	SU Colts	0
QAS Cosson, Miner	2	ACTAS	0
Sydney United Mujanovic	1	UTS Olympic Zorbas 2	2
Marconi Colts Gibson, Palapanis	2	N'castle Breakers Owens Mansley	2

Byes: Wollongong City, Marconi Fairfield

Southern Division

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
M Knights	18	16	0	2	77	20	48
Carlton	18	16	0	2	47	10	48
Gippsland	18	13	2	3	44	18	41
VIS	17	9	3	5	41	19	30
Bulleen	17	9	2	6	27	21	29
Bentleigh	18	7	2	9	26	33	23
Heidelberg	18	6	2	10	25	50	20
Albury	19	5	1	13	26	36	16
Sth Melb	18	4	3	11	33	32	15
Altona	18	3	2	13	19	67	11
SM Rockets	17	1	1	15	13	72	4

Northern Division

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
AIS	19	13	2	4	67	19	41
W'gong City	20	11	4	5	43	36	37
AIS	20	14	2	4	71	19	44
Olympic	19	11	4	4	57	28	37
Wollongong	20	11	4	5	43	36	37
QAS	20	10	4	6	42	24	34
Syd Utd	19	8	6	5	51	35	30
Marconi	19	9	2	8	38	36	29
Newcastle	19	7	6	6	41	36	27
Marc Colts	20	7	4	9	32	45	25
ACTAS	20	5	6	9	23	51	21
SU Colts	19	4	3	12	23	54	15
NSWIS	19	3	5	11	24	45	14
Olympic Colts	20	3	4	13	29	65	13

By Roy Hay

Round 24 Southern Division

Friday March 27
Bulleen Inter v South Melbourne Rockets (7pm, Veneto club)

Sunday 29 March
South Melbourne v Altona Magic (3.30pm, Bob Jane Stadium)
Bentleigh Greens v VIS (4pm, Kingston Heath)

Gippsland Falcons, Melbourne Knights, Albury-Wodonga - Bye

Northern Division

Friday 27 March
Newcastle Breakers v Sydney United Colts (5pm, Topper Stadium)

Saturday 28 March
Marconi Fairfield v AIS (4.30 pm, Marconi Stadium)
NSWIS v Sydney United (5 pm, Valentine Park)

Sunday 29 March
UTS Olympic v QAS (4 pm, Sydney Football Stadium)

Monday 30 March
ACTAS v Wollongong City (5pm, Bruce Stadium)

Byes: Marconi Fairfield Colts, UTS Olympic Colts

Leading Goalscorers

Southern Division

Adis Kablar	Melbourne Knights	14
John Kalabric	Melbourne Knights	13
Zoran Petrevski	VIS	12
Jovanco Novacevski	Carlton	10
Luke Cheney	Gippsland Falcons	10

Northern Division

Mile Sterjovski	AIS/Sydney United	25
Mark Hagger	Marconi Fairfield Colts	20
Joe Bruni	Marconi Fairfield	13
Chris Tanchevski	Newcastle Breakers/AIS	11
Azur Mujanovic	Sydney United	11
Jim Bakis	UTS Olympic	10
Nick Carle	UTS Olympic	10

Southern Division

Round 23 kicked-off with **Altona Magic** at home to **Bulleen Inter** on Wednesday last and the game turned on the only goal scored by Zoran Kostadinovski for Bulleen on 17 minutes. Both sides had numerous chances to alter the score but the defences held out till the end.

The **Victorian Institute of Sport** beat **Albury Wodonga** by four goals to nil at Kim Reserve. Joshua Kennedy scored the opener after only six minutes (on his first starting game since joining the Institute). Mustafa Mustafa made it two four minutes later and Serhat Hulusi added the third on 48 and Boris Ovcin completed the scoring after 66 minutes. Albury Wodonga keeper Joel Davey was outstanding, keeping out a number of VIS attempts as the Institute took control of the match. Adrian Cuzzupe, Kennedy and Mustafa were the pick of the VIS players.

Ovcin, Kennedy, Steve Laurie, Joey di Iorio and Fab Lettieri are off to the Joeys training camp next week. Good luck to them and the squad.

South Melbourne led **Gippsland Falcons** by a James Kasikakis goal just before the interval, but the lads from the Valley hit back with two second-half goals to win 2-1. Luke Cheney took his goal tally for the season to double figures in 73 minutes and substitute Alex Halikias made the points secure on 84.

In a match brought forward from Round 24, **Carlton** hammered **Heidelberg United** by ten goals to nil. Marco Maisano was chief destroyer with four, while Pece Siveski grabbed a hat-trick and Cameron Pino two goals.

The other came from Robert Trajkovski, his second in successive games for the Youth team.

Northern Division

The **Australian Institute of Sport** had another good win over **Sydney United Colts** by four goals to nil. Michael Ferrante opened the scoring and sweeper Ljubo Milicevic added a second just before the break. Ivan Ergic in 66 and David Onoforo after 76 accounted for the second-half goals.

In a tough and thoroughly entertaining match, **UTS Olympic** just came out on top against **Sydney United** by two goals to one. Peter Zorbas was on target twice for Olympic while Azur Mujanovic's eleventh goal of the season was all that United could manage. Olympic and Wollongong City, who had a bye this week, remain seven points behind the AIS, but Olympic have a game in hand.

Queensland Academy of Sport had a two-nil win over the **ACT Academy** at Suncorp, with goals by Francis Cosson and Russell Miner. This keeps the Queenslanders in fourth place four points ahead of Sydney United.

NSW Institute of Sport just managed to beat **UTS Olympic Colts** by three goals to two. Matt Seale scored both goals for Olympic Colts, but Liam Austin, Daniel Watkins and Michael Cavallaro were the marksmen for the Institute.

Finally, **Marconi Fairfield Colts and Newcastle Breakers** drew two-all at Marconi Stadium. Chad Gibson and Terry Palapanis scored for the Colts and Greg Owens and Chad Mansley for the Breakers. The draw maintains the relative position of the two teams: seven and eight on the table, with Newcastle ahead by two points.

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LES MURRAY COMMENTS

Well I guess we shouldn't be surprised. Manchester United is, once again, out of the European Cup. Prematurely, their fans would say, eliminated at the quarter finals.

In midweek French club Monaco did an Iran on United, winning on the away-goals after a crafty one all draw at Old Trafford. Bang! There goes another year's campaign to win the big one, in 20 years of trying since the last and only time United did it.

Let me say I am not a dyed-in-the-wool Manchester United fan. In the sense that I care little whether they succeed or fail. But I am caught up in all this universal homage that United enjoys and the way fans here in Australia, whether they are from Manchester or Mudgee, whether they are English or Ethiopian, galvanise behind the Red Devils' cause.

Man United are documented as the most popular football club in the world and one has to feel frustrated at their lack of international success.

At Old Trafford last Wednesday they were again outwitted by the craft of Continental opposition.

Monaco hit them when United's brainless passion to push forward numbed them into silly complacency.

Monaco's early goal was later cancelled but, of course, it was already sufficient for Monaco to advance. I should have known.

Some weeks ago, driven probably more by the heart than the head, I predicted that this was to be United's year. That winning the European Cup 20 years after they first did it against Benfica at Wembley was poetry too nice to be untrue. But, alas, I was wrong again.

Now United are in deep crisis. Still leading the Premier League but out of all other competitions, it is a stark possibility that they will end up with nought for the season.

The loss at Old Trafford to Arsenal the weekend before last emphasised the possibilities. A spate of injuries and an unusual bout of a lull in confidence can be a dreadful recipe for failure.

Fact is United are not a good team. Not a good team of players. Ryan Giggs has been injured and without him there is a clear shortage of quality.

David Beckham is a fine player and handsome boy but, despite what Posh Spice might believe, he is not the match winning all-round superstar United needs and has been used to.

The last such man in the famed red shirt was Eric Cantona. And how times have changed since he left.

Manager Alex Ferguson might have searched for the ideal replacement but he hasn't found it.

Worse, I don't believe he searched wide enough. In a world teeming with football talent, I cannot believe that a club like Manchester United needs to rely on, with the greatest respect, Andy Cole and Ole Gunner Solksjaer to lead their attack.

Maybe Ronaldo was unaffordable. As was Marcelo Salas. Juninho slipped through the net as did Ravanelli, Marco Simone went to Paris, Christian Vieri to Atletico, Boksic to Lazio.

The Brazilian genius Denilson was snapped up by Real Betis of Seville, Edmundo moved to Fiorentina, Romario went home to Flamengo and Stoichkov, flicked by Barcelona because of indiscipline, is going back to the Balkans.

Alex Ferguson has scarcely noticed. No, the wily Ferguson is not as wily as he seems. I don't believe he knows much about the numbers of quality players that are available in the international market and, worse, I don't think he realises the importance of them.

Fact is Manchester United's golden era was not in the 90s, despite those repeated English championships, but in the late 60s when they conquered Europe with men like George Best, Bobby Charlton and Denis Law.

They need stars and players of real quality. Since Cantona they haven't had them. And, again with respect, the likes of Andy Cole, Paul Scholes and Nicky Butt won't win them a damn thing. At least not the European Cup. And God knows they need that.

Eric Cantona: United have been unable to replace the French genius.

AROUND THE CLUB

ILLAWARRA INSIGHT

By Phil Murphy

THE ITALIAN CONNECTION

They have formed a sister-city relationship with Cosenza, an Italian Serie C (third division) club.

Recently Cosenza director Domenico de Vincenti visited Wollongong and was guest of honour during an Ericsson Cup game at Brandon Park.

He was presented with a large coloured photograph of the Wolves team and an autographed Wolves shirt.

The Italian club had Wolves director Gino Chiodo as a guest at one of their games late last year.

Chiodo said the people in Cosenza, in the south of Italy, were very interested to learn about Australian soccer.

He said they know that players from this country are playing all over the world these days.

"The Cosenza directors have indicated they would welcome the chance to have one or two of our younger players spend time with their club," Chiodo added.

"We could work it so the Wolves were able to host their players. Obviously it would be great experience for the players involved."

★★★

ANNUAL AUCTION AT FRAT CLUB

Quite a few items went under the hammer to raise money for the Wolves on Friday night.

The occasion was the club's annual auction night at Fraternity Club.

Always a big money-raiser for the club, the auction attracted a very big crowd who brought their wallets with them.

Main attraction was a Ducati motorcycle, provided by Fraser Motorcycles of Wollongong. There was also a framed autographed photograph of English legend Bobby Charlton.

A pair of Muhammed Ali's shorts in addition to a framed and autographed picture of the 'Champ' also attracted great interest.

★★★

SEVIN READY FOR RETURN

Two of the Wolves walking wounded have become the jogging wounded.

Neil Harlock and Michael Reda both suffered ankle fractures this season but happily they have resumed light training.

Coach Nick Theodorakopoulos is being realistic when he says he doesn't expect them back before the start of next season.

"It is great to see them at training but I would hate to see either of them come back too soon and suffer another injury because they weren't quite ready," the coach said cautiously.

"David Huxley suffered medial ligament damage against Marconi and won't be back this season but Sonny Sevin (ankle operation) is back training and will be available next week."

VIC VOICE

By Dwyght Tuffnell

BRONDOLINO UNHAPPY

The Victorian Soccer Federation is faced with a potential headache after the meeting on Sunday to decide the make up of next season's Ericsson Cup.

It was likely that one of the Victorian clubs would go, leaving the VSF with the same problem of how many clubs to relegate or how many teams in the competition.

VSF Chairman, Joe Brondolino, has called for Soccer Australia to go back to "proper promotion-relegation.

"This is the only competition in the world where there is no promotion-relegation on a normal scale. No promotion to the Ericsson Cup is having an impact on Victorian clubs, they've just got nowhere to go. Look at Altona Magic. They have won the Premier League for the last three years but they can't get promoted."

Victoria has had problems before with both Heidelberg United and Brunswick Zebras relegated in recent years.

But clubs like Gippsland Falcons being promoted from the Premier League to the national competition isn't happening any more and clubs like Carlton and Collingwood Warriors aren't getting the necessary support, according to Brondolino.

"They had no support financially, no support with marketing, sponsorship or members.

"It took the AFL $41 million and 15 years without the ethnic problems to establish the Sydney Swans whilst Soccer Australia wants affiliation fees from the clubs."

The Vic Chairman said he would like to see Soccer Australia follow the AFL in setting two grounds in each state for soccer and only soccer.

The ground shouldn't be part of the criteria for a given club entering the Ericsson Cup, explains Brondolino.

"There should only be one criterion in relation to being promotion: financial viability, provided all the other issues are in place."

An establishment of a salary cap is something else he would like to see implemented.

"How can these clubs be paying a player $100,000 a year when you're seeing only 1,500-2,000 people go through the gate.

"We're in this situation at the moment and the clubs are going broke because their wage packet is going through the roof."

CITY ON THE MOVE

ADELAIDE CITY .....3 MELBOURNE KNIGHTS.....1

By Val Migliaccio

Adelaide City marched back into second spot on goal-difference after a convincing 3-1 won over top six contenders Melbourne Knights at Hindmarsh on Sunday.

The Zebras were without skipper Alex Tobin and Mark Yates, who were both suspended and had to reshuffle their line-up to accommodate the blow. Milan Ivanovic was captain with Angelo Costanzo and Brad Armour covering in the heart of the defence.

The Knights fielded their latest signing, goalkeeper Peter Schwellinger, who replaced regular custodian Joe Didulica, away on Olyroo duty.

The match was an important one for both the Knights and the Zebras, with a slip-up for either side detrimental to their standings coming into the finals.

The match had four goals on the board after 25 minutes and the Knights, although beaten, chased the game down to the wire. Adelaide City were content to play for long periods without the ball and in the end their patience wore the Knights down.

Damian Mori had an injury cloud over his head and he took part playing the role as third striker coming from deep. The tactic worked as the Knights had to change their plans to try and stop Mori.

The match was seven minutes old when Mori scored his 18th goal for the season. It was truly a gem, starting with some good lead up work by Dino Mennillo on the left who supplied Brad Hassell, he then supplied Mori who sold a dummy on the edge of the box, made the necessary space and bent the ball into the top right hand corner of the net.

Ante Deak equalised for the Knights with a piece of brilliance in the 12th minute. He rounded Costanzo outside the box and from an acute angle slotted the ball past Jason Petkovic.

Two minutes later sloppy defending saw the Zebras take a 2-1 lead when Ivan Jolic was robbed on the edge of the box by Scott Thomas, who squared in a cross for Michael Brooks who made no mistake from four metres. Marth was then replaced succumbing to injury.

In the 26th minute Mennillo stole the limelight with an incredible goal. Mori supplied the pass out wide and Mennillo lobbed the ball over Schwellinger from the corner of the penalty box and into the top of the net.

Disaster struck again for the Knights when goalscorer Deak was also replaced in the 27th minute suffering an injury.

This goal fired the Knights into action and they continued to pressure, but only the excellent goalkeeping kept the scoreline down (Petkovic made three crucial saves). The first in the 32nd minute when he denied Ivan Kelic. In the 56th minute a point-blank header by John Didulica had Petkovic at full stretch and in the 86th minute he denied the busy Tom Pondeljak with a desperate save with the ball destined for the net.

Zebra Michael Brooks said later: "It was a tough match for us and the Knights pressured us to the very end. The second-half felt like we were playing at Somers Street with a strong wind favouring the Knights. In the end, the win was a good result for us."

Jason Petkovic: Brilliant in goal.

CITY: Petkovic, Armour, Ivanovic, Costanzo, Mori (Pirone 85), Hassell (Dodd 68), Mennillo, Gibson, Trajanovski (Brazzale 79), Brooks, Thomas.

KNIGHTS: Schwellinger, Kovacevic, Jolic , Banini, Marth (Rajher 22), Pondeljak, Kelic, Susa, Didulica, Deak (Trupkovic 27), Collina.

SCORERS
City: Mori 7, Brooks 21, Mennillo 25
Knights: Deak 12

CROWD: 2,823

POY
3 Petkovic (AC)
2 Mori (AC)
1 Ivanovic (AC)

ERICSSON CUP

Match Reports

COURAGEOUS CATLIN SAVES OLYMPIC

SYDNEY UNITED.....0 SYDNEY OLMYPIC.....0

By John Economos

Sydney United, despite missing eight players through injuries or suspensions, were most unfortunate to be held to a scoreless draw by Sydney Olympic, almost entirely due to a superb performance by Olympic's experienced and defiant giant goalkeeper Bobby Catlin last Sunday night at the Parramatta Stadium.

The powerful, alert and heroic Catlin was called upon to make no less than six outstanding blocks from a raging Sydney United as Olympic's midfield collapsed under United's sustained pressure, especially in the second-half.

United's hero was also their goalkeeper, 24-year-old Andrew Crews who was called upon to make two crucial saves from Olympic's counter-attacks.

Olympic's midfield was woeful when ever their reliable and industrious skipper Peter Tsekenis ventured upfield to support his strikers.

United was missing livewire midfielders Jason Culina and Jacob Burns (on national duty with Raul Blanco's Olympic squad), Stuart Munro, Peter Bennett, David Mitchell and captain Paul Bilokapic through injuries with David Barrett and Phiilips serving suspensions.

United's coach David Mitchell pulled back striker Abbas Saad and pushed forward central defender Mark Rudan both into the 'engine-room'. They excelled in their new roles and both even got forward enough to rifle dangerous strikes on Catlin's frame.

A United cross in the 30th minute saw sweeper Richard Plesa dangerously head on target, but the huge frame of Catlin saved Olympic, and three minutes from the break a point blank drive by United's midfielder Marin Galic again was blocked by Catlin.

With so many new players filling in for United it was understandable that they lacked fluency in the first session. Mitchell quickly rectified the ailment at the break and slotted in Dominic Usalj into the side.

Just a minute before the break Olympic almost grabbed the lead when Tsekenis twisted his way past two defenders and scrambled into United's box, but his stabbed effort at the target was barely touched onto the base of the right post by Crews.

Olympic's Derek Poimer, seven minutes into the second-half, beat a lunging Velimir Kupresak tackle to fire a 20 metre drive that shaved United's right post.

On the hour mark Mark Rudan who was by now having a marvellous game, dribbled past two defenders before blasting from 22 metres a shot that narrowly screamed wide of the upright.

Nine minutes later it seemed United would score as a Usalj corner fired from the left found striker Mile Sterjovski, but his crashing header was brilliantly saved by a diving Catlin.

In the 75th minute Catlin yet again saved Olympic when he fully stretched out to nail in another power-laden Rudan drive.

Sterjovski eight minutes from the bell raised United's hopes as he dragged the ball around Catlin's outspread frame. But the talented striker ballooned his effort well over the horizontal from the left side.

With four minutes left Olympic's now desperate central marker Adam Ciantar ventured upfield and swung a dangerous cross into United's box to find striker Norman Tome. He obliged by getting a strong head to the cross but custodian Crews stretched brilliantly to barely tip over his crossbar.

David Mitchell lamented later: "It was a bit disappointing as I felt we dominated them, especially in the second-half, but our effort was good from all the boys and in the end I suppose it could have gone either way.

"With so many of my players missing through suspensions or injuries, in the end I was happy not to lose. Santalab, our right defender, did well for his debut in the first team."

Meanwhile United's also heroic goalkeeper Crews, jokingly remarked: "Zeljko Kalac has gone to Germany (Borussia Dortmund), but should he come back I shouldn't be dropped after this match, surely?"

UNITED: Crews: Santalab, Vrkic, Plesa, Kupresak, Hooker: Saad, Rudan, Galic (Usalj 46): Sterjovski, Jerman (Bosevski 79).

OLYMPIC: Catlin: Baillie, Juric, Ciantar: Willard (Rastall 70), Tsekenis, L. Carle, Ardone (Petratos 77), Augerinos: Poimer (Taliadoros 67), Tome.

CROWD: 2,895

POY
3 Catlin (SO)
2 Crews (SU)
1 Rudan (SU)

MILLER'S HEROICS DENIES WOLVES

WOLLONGONG CITY .....0 ADELAIDE SHARKS.....2

By Phil Murphy

A brilliant display by Adelaide Sharks goalkeeper David Miller against Wollongong Wolves at Brandon Park on Sunday night has kept his team's slim play-off hopes alive.

It was their first away win of the season and coach Adrian Santrac said later his players had to work very hard for the three points.

"Wollongong did enough to win the game comfortably. It was plenty of hard work and some fine saves from David which allowed us to take the points. At half-time, I asked my players to stand up and be counted.

"They remained focussed on what they had to do and under the circumstances it was a fighting result.

"Since the start of the season, I have lost 12 players. Wollongong dominated the game, forcing 13 corners to two, but Miller made five fine save in the first-half alone."

A one-handed effort from a Jason Connolly header just before half-time was a gem.

Kosta Salapasidis had two shots saved by Miller while the Sharks custodian also denied Sasho Dimoski, Scott Chipperfield and Tony Perinich.

Adelaide conceded the midfield to Wollongong for long periods but, despite playing some fine football, the home team failed to break through.

In the second-half it was noticeable that Adelaide had six or seven players across the park in an attempt to nullify Wollongong.

The visitors were away to a dream start — a goal up after 90 seconds. Alex Duric and Joe Iriarte worked a one-two on the edge of the box and big Duric strolled forward to score from 12m.

The second goal was scored 17 minutes from the end, the Sharks playing a long ball forward from the right to Duric on the left, his first-time cross was headed in by Iriarte.

Wolves coach Nich Theodorakopoulos said after the game his players were asleep for both goals.

"We have completely dominated the game with nothing to show for it," he lamented.

"Hs team-mates should give David Miller their winning bonus, I thought he was quite outstanding. He stood between us and the three points. I am quite happy with the way we played, particularly in the first-half."

The Wolves still occupy a top six place with Canberra (away) and Perth and Sydney United (home) to play.

Alex Duric: The big striker had the ball in the net after just 90 seconds.

WOLVES: Hughes, Ceccoli, Stanton, Connoly, Horsley, Surjan, Dimoski (Masi 69), Chipperfield, Souris, Perinich (Younis 8?), Salapasidis (Spencer 69).

SHARKS: Miller, Tibaldi, Kuzmanovic, Milosovic, Alagich, Iriarte, Duric (Iandorio 85), Borghetto (Artone 65) Pezos, Cutillo, Misailidis.

SCORERS
Sharks: Duric 2 Iriarte 73.

CROWD: 5,381

POY
3 Miller (AS)
2 Horsley (WC)
1 Kuzmanovic (AS)

UNDERSTRENGTH SOUTH SHOWS CLASS

SOUTH MELBOURNE.....2 GIPPSLAND FALCONS 1

By Dwyght Tuffnell

South Melbourne consolidated top spot on the Ericsson Cup table with a gritty 2-1 win over Gippsland Falcons on Sunday.

It was nowhere near South's best performance of the season, but they took the three points despite some shaky defensive moments in the second-half.

South Melbourne, missing their Olyroo quartet plus the injured David Clarkson, although jittery at times, were never really threatened by the Falcons.

"They put us under a bit of pressure in the second-half," said coach Ange Postecoglou, "but I can't recall Michael Petkovic having to make one save."

Following the Soccer Australia decision to have a fifteen team competition next season, Falcons coach Frank Arok said the club were "celebrating, because they've got one more year."

Although Arok won't be there coaching them, it's a boost for the beleaguered club as they were one of the clubs who might have been relegated.

The first half an hour of the match belonged to South Melbourne.

They scored twice in the opening twenty minutes and continually carved open a very disorganised Gippsland defence.

Con Boutsianis set South on their way with a 12th minute goal, taking on Vaughan Coveny's through-ball before lobbing Bojo Jevdjevic in the Gippsland goal.

The Falcons custodian was beaten again seven minutes later when another through-ball, this time from Paul Trimboli, found George Goutzioulis who was able to slip the ball into the net at far post.

Mark Foy hit a post for the Falcons shortly after and South also came close to scoring a third with a terrific move.

Coveny released Goran Lozanovski, whose chip to the far post was measured for John Anastasiadis but he was unable to knock the ball in.

Two minutes into first-half stoppage-time the Falcons grabbed a scrappy goal. Manny Gotis' corner was headed against the bar by Will Hastie and Foy was on hand to bundle the ball over the line.

Just forty seconds into the second-half the Falcons went close to equalising when Nick Tsaltas headed Doug Marcina's cross marginally over the bar.

Although they pushed men up, brought on substitutes and chopped and changed their line-up, the Falcons never looked like breaking level.

In fact it was South Melbourne who had the best chances in what remained of the game.

John Anastasiadis' tame shot was saved by Jevdjevic and Claudio Canosa twice made crucial interceptions to deny both Boutsianis and Trimboli.

Arok said after the game that the Falcons had missed both Archie Thompson and Tony Sekulic and that "with a little bit of luck we might have been able to get a draw.

"We had a lack of cohesion in the first-half and the fact that we did something different in the second-half shows everyone that it is no accident that we are putting some decent results together," Arok stated.

Postecoglou was happy with his team's performance in what was a danger game for the top side.

"Today was a game where we could have come up with a million excuses if we'd lost, but we went out there and got the three points.

"I am very proud of the players, it's been a tough week for us, today we were down to the last player in the squad."

Con Boutsianis

SOUTH: Petkovic, Iosifidis, De Amicis, Orlic, Panopoulos, Coveny, Trimboli, Boutsianis, Lozanovski, Anastasiadis (Catalano 90), Goutzioulis.

FALCONS: Jevdjevic, Bell (Mitroulas 75), Canosa, Gotis, Palamaras, Marcina, Tsaltas (Hutchinson 78), Foy, MacNicol, Osman (Mihajlovic 83), Hastie.

SCORERS
South: Boutsianis 12, Goutzioulis 19
Falcons: Foy 45

CROWD: 4,450

POY
3 Goutzioulis (SM)
2 Trimboli (SM)
1 Osman (GF)

ERICSSON CUP

Results Round Twenty-Three

Brisbane Strikers	2	Canberra Cosmos	2	Wollongong Wolves	0	Adelaide Sharks	2
Perth Glory	1	Marconi Fairfield	1	Sydney United	0	UTS Olympic	0
South Melbourne	2	Gippsland Falcons	1	Adelaide City	3	Melbourne Knights	1

Carlton SC v Newcastle Breakers (played Monday 23 March)

Round Twenty-Four Fixtures

Odds courtesy of SportOdds

2.50	Newcastle Breakers	3.25	Melbourne Knights	2.50
2.75	Marconi Fairfield	3.25	Adelaide City	2.25
2.00	Adelaide Sharks	3.25	Carlton SC	3.50
2.25	Gippsland Falcons	3.25	Sydney United	2.75
2.25	UTS Olympic	3.25	Brisbane Strikers	2.75
1.70	South Melbourne	3.50	Perth Glory	4.00
2.75	Canberra Cosmos	3.30	Wollongong Wolves	2.20

ERICSSON CUP TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
South Melbourne	23	13	7	3	51	31	46
Adelaide City	23	12	4	7	42	26	40
Sydney United	23	11	7	5	32	21	40
Marconi Fairfield	23	10	6	7	26	25	36
Wollongong Wolves	23	11	2	10	45	30	35
Melbourne Knights	23	10	5	8	35	29	35
Carlton SC	22	8	9	5	29	23	33
Perth Glory	23	9	5	9	30	35	32
Adelaide Sharks	23	9	4	10	29	31	31
UTS Olympic	23	9	4	10	31	39	31
Gippsland Falcons	23	7	6	10	25	31	27
Brisbane Strikers	23	6	4	13	22	35	22
Canberra Cosmos	23	3	8	12	26	49	17
Newcastle Breakers	22	3	7	12	26	44	16

ERICSSON CUP LEADING SCORERS

18	Damian Mori	Adelaide City
13	Pablo Cardozo	Adelaide Sharks
12	Scott Chipperfield	Wollongong Wolves
12	Norman Tome	UTS Olympic
11	Tom Pondeljak	Melbourne Knights
10	Paul Trimboli	South Melbourne
8	Ivan Kelic	Melbourne Knights
8	Abbas Saad	Sydney United
8	Clayton Zane	Newcastle Breakers
8	Peter Buljan	Canberra Cosmos
8	Anthony Surjan	Wollongong Wolves
8	John Markovski	Carlton SC
7	Bobby Despotovski	Perth Glory
7	Brad Maloney	Marconi Fairfield
7	Michael Brooks	Adelaide City

1998 WORLD CUP

Brazil	4.00
France	7.00
England	8.00
Germany	8.00
Holland	9.00
Italy	9.00
Argentina	13.00
Spain	16.00
Yugoslavia	23.00
Croatia	26.00
Nigeria	29.00
Romania	29.00
Denmark	34.00
Colombia	41.00
Norway	41.00
Bulgaria	51.00
Paraguay	51.00
Belgium	61.00
Austria	91.00
Cameroon	101.00
Chile	126.00
Mexico	126.00
Scotland	141.00
Morocco	151.00
Sth Africa	201.00
Sth Korea	201.00
USA	201.00
Jamaica	251.00
Saudi Arabia	251.00
Japan	401.00
Tunisia	401.00
Iran	401.00

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Round 24 Preview

By Stuart Jones

Newcastle v Melbourne Knights

Newcastle's recent home record has given them four points. For the Knights this will be their second road trip in a row. Newcastle have added to their playing strength in recent weeks and the boys will be put to the test by this strong team. Led by Andrew Marth, the Knights take no prisoners and want to remain in the play-off race, while for Newcastle it is all about pride. The Knights have already put four in the Newcastle net this season (4-1 victors at Knights Stadium), whilst over two games last season they also scored four goals to one (2-0 at home 2-1 away).

Prediction: Knights

Marconi Fairfield v Adelaide City

Adelaide City have played poorly in their last couple of away games and this is a tough place to right the ship. Strong in the Fairfielders' minds will be the 5-0 thrashing they were handed by the Zebras in Round 10. However, Marconi did the 'double' over Adelaide City in the regular season (in fact they won three from four until their final clash in Adelaide when City came back from the dead to progress in the finals). Marconi and City are also jockeying for positioning in the top six. Marconi's home record reads: 6 wins, 3 draws, and 2 losses. City's travels sees them at 4-3-4.

Prediction: Marconi

Gippsland Falcons v Sydney United

Looking at some of their recent home games it looks like the wind has blown over at Falcons Park. They have three wins from 11 home matches and the Pumas have won six of their 11 away fixtures. Frank Arok's boys have already taken an away point off the Pumas by drawing 1-1 at Parramatta Stadium in a game marred by controversy. The great side of last season at Sydney United could only put one past Gippsland, but of course, if the Pumas keep a clean sheet in this one it is all Mitch's men need.

Prediction: Sydney United

UTS Olympic v Brisbane Srikers

UTS 5-3, Strikers 4-1, Strikers 1-0 are the last three results these two sides have played out. Olympic certainly did well in the first-half of their last home game whilst the Strikers are trying to avoid the record of the biggest drop of any league champions the following season in the NSL. Olympic's home record has seen them take full points from just six games, whilst the Strikers have only won three games on the road (two of those in NSW). Should be a great game.

Prediction: High scoring draw

Adelaide Sharks v Carlton

The Sharks' home record is phenomenal, having lost only twice there all season. Carlton's away record is very good but their last trip saw them return empty handed. The two sides have already drawn 1-1 this season and this is a crucial game for a Carlton team who have recently seen their first spell outside the top six.

Prediction: Adelaide Sharks

South Melbourne v Perth Glory

Last season Perth went to Melbourne and lost by a solitary goal. This season in Round 10 they upset South by belting them 4-1, still their largest defeat of the season. South Melbourne are strong at home and are out for revenge. Perth have been rather wobbly recently but this is another 'must win' game for them. A shock of Round 10 proportions, unfortunately for Glory, does not look to be on the cards, but as Messrs Saint and Greavsie would say: "Football's a funny game".

Prediction: South Melbourne

Canberra Cosmos v Wollongong City

Of course a new coach for Canberra, the very man who enjoyed the 8-1 result at Wollongong, at the expense of the current editor of ABSW, on Radio One 1620AM. How things turn full circle? Other results (2-1 and 4-2 wins to the 'Gong) are almost superfluous compared to that match at Brandon Park. City's away record is poor although they did win at Gippsland and the tightness of the league means one loss could be terminal.

Prediction: Wollongong

ERICSSON CUP Match Reports

GLORY DRAW MAY PROVE FATAL

PERTH GLORY .....1 MARCONI FAIRFIELD.....1

By Richard Kreider

"If anyone wants to throw in the towel, don't turn up next week." Those words of warning were uttered by Perth Glory coach Gary Marocchi to his players following a draw with Marconi Fairfield at Perth Oval last Sunday, which has left them with a difficult task of making the Ericsson Cup play-offs.

The Glory's three remaining games are all away fixtures — against South Melbourne, Wollongong Wolves and the rejuvenated Canberra Cosmos, and the Perth boys will need to win all three if they are to have any chance of going through.

"If we play like we did today, then we are still in with a good chance of qualifying," a hopeful Marocchi said. But while the 1-1 result dented Glory's finals chances, Marconi were able to slip into fourth place because of defeats suffered by Melbourne Knights and Wollongong.

Perth kicked-off the crucial encounter without their tall defender Danny Hay (groin injury) and midfielder Troy Halpin, who was reportedly dropped for disciplinary reasons after being dissatisfied with Marocchi's instructions to play in a deep midfield role. His subsequent outburst to the media following the previous week's defeat at the hands of the Adelaide Sharks cost the new Socceroo a hefty fine.

As it was, Anthony Carbone was superb in keeping Francis Awaritefe out of the game, and Gavin Wilkinson performed equally well in trying to shut-out Sean Babic.

The evenly fought contest tilted in Glory's favour in the 25th minute when a long-range strike from Bobby Despotovski was pushed onto the upright by goalkeeper Ante Covic, and Vas Kalogeracos was suitably placed to stab the loose ball home after it rolled along the front of the goal.

However former South Korean international Pen Keun-Kim silenced the boisterous crowd in the 57th minute with a 30-metre equaliser that soared into the roof of the net.

However substitute Scott Halpin was sent goal-bound in the 84th minute only to be hauled down by Dominic Longo (earning the Stallions stopper a red card).

Awaritefe had the last opportunity of the game a minute from time but goalkeeper Anthony Franken was quick to smother his attack.

The 15,725 attendance produced a grand total of 194,630 for the thirteen home matches at a healthy average of 14,971.

Vas Kalogeracos: Scored again but can the Glory make the Top Six!

GLORY: Franken, Wilkinson, Buljubasic, Naven, Miller, Strudwick, Despotovski (Siasia 72), Tapai, Afkos, Carbone (McVittie 85) Kalogeracos (S. Halpin 75).

STALLIONS: Covic, Babic , Longo, Casserly (Van Cuylenberg 75), McDonald, Maloney, Babic (Yoon 79), Awaritefe, Renaud, Kim, Zoric.

SCORERS
Glory: Kalogeracos 24
Marconi: Kim 57

CROWD: 15,725

POY
3 Carbone (PG)
2 Naven (PG)
1 Babic (M)

RASIC'S COSMOS IN GUTSY COMEBACK

BRISBANE STRIKERS .....2 CANBERRA COSMOS 2

By Glenn Davis

Brisbane Strikers coach Frank Farina was left shaking his head in disbelief after the reigning premiers once again let victory slip from their grasp, this time against Canberra Cosmos at Suncorp Stadium on Saturday night.

They appeared to be cruising with a comfortable 2-0 lead at half-time but some how Canberra produced an Houdini act to snatch a 2-2 draw.

"We were cruising at 2-0 up but at the end of the game we shot ourselves in the foot," a dejected Farina said.

"It's been the story of our season. I can't think when we've led so easily all season and came away with only a point. We even had a chance in the last minute to win but our shot was cleared off the line."

Unlike previous games, when Farina was forced to play youth, this time he had one of his better sides together, although it was still missing Nick Meredith, Matt Bell, Wayne Knipe and Kasey Werhman with injury, while Steve Laybutt was absent on Olyroo duty.

Rod Brown, the league's greatest goalscorer, made a triumphant return from injury grabbing the first goal in the 21st minute when he turned Canberra defender Gordon Hunter inside out on the edge of the area before rifling his shot into the net.

The Strikers had several more opportunities to increase their lead before half-time while Canberra also were not without chances, mostly from long-range attempts.

Strikers defender Glenn Gwynne, arguably one of the league's best defenders, put the home side ahead in the final seconds before the interval with only his second national league goal in 143 appearances. He was frequently pushing forward in attack, and he pounced on a cutback from Andrew Harper to drill home a powerful left foot shot.

Canberra coach Rale Rasic made two telling substitutions to draw level with the Strikers inside the next half hour.

At half-time Australia's 1974 World Cup coach brought on Harry James, who capitalised on a square defence racing onto a perfect pass from Damien Brown to slot home pass Strikers keeper Clint Bolton five minutes after the resumption.

Canberra midfielder Ante Moric narrowly missed putting his side on level terms six minutes later when he struck the crossbar with a powerful left foot shot from inside the area.

With the scent of an equaliser in the air, Rasic brought on Marko Perinovic for Michael Musitano in the 70th minute, and the change brought rewards five minutes later when he lopped a header over Bolton's head.

With the scores level at 2-2, a shell-shocked Brisbane dug deep looking for the winner.

Gwynne fired in a piledriver from 30 metres which required a great save from Canberra keeper Tony Giannasca, then two minutes from normal time Toplica Popovich cleared a goal bound Gary Blackford shot off the line.

Harry James: Began the Cosmos comeback.

STRIKERS: Bolton, Gwynne, Zoricich, Williams, Farina (Hews 64), Brown (Brownlie 82), T Cranney (Blackford 64), Battistin, Harris, Packer, Harper.

COSMOS: Giannasca, Roberts, Moric (Haythornthwaite 88), Hunter, Kelly, Musitano (Perinovic 70), Buljan, Wilson, Popovich, Brown, Kim (James 45)

SCORERS
Strikers: Brown 21, Gwynne 45
Cosmos: James 50, Perinovic 75

CROWD: 3,969

POY
3 Gwynne (BS)
2 Zoricich (BS)
1 Hunter (CC)

COSMOS RALE TO THE CAUSE

CANBERRA COSMOS.....1 SOUTH MELBOURNE 1

By Graham Cooke

(Round 22 Match)

It is far too early to talk of miracles, but new Canberra Cosmos coach Rale Rasic certainly performed some minor magic in the five days between his appointment and his first game in charge of the Ericsson Cup's bottom club.

And there could have been no stiffer test than the visit of league leader South Melbourne to a newly-reopened Bruce Stadium, and the Cosmos passed it with a battling 1-1 draw.

Yet for most of the first-half it had seemed like more of the same as Canberra defended with ten, sometimes 11 players, rarely getting out of its own third of the field, let alone across the half-way line As much as Souths probed, so they were denied by an opponent which was playing with a resolve seldom seen this season.

Tackles were thrown in, players supported each other, ground was covered — but when the inevitable mistake was made and Ante Moric was dispossessed by Bill Damianos deep inside the Cosmos penalty area, the worst fears of the home fans seemed about to be realised.

Damianos used his possession well, slipping a pass to workaholic striker Vaughan Coveny, who finished off from close-range.

The floodgates were creaking, but the old-style Cosmos bundle-dropping did not eventuate, instead, they hit back to equalise.

And at no better time in the seconds before half-time when a free-kick from Paul Dee floated straight to the feet of Gordon Hunter, who volleyed home a cracking effort.

In an all-action second-half Canberra at last came out of its shell to seriously take the game to the leaders. Both sides had their chances, neither could take them, and the result was a share of the points, which probably pleased South Melbourne a great deal less than the Cosmos.

New Cosmos coach Rale Rasic said afterwards he had not attempted to tell his team "that this was just another game.

"It is foolish to try and get away with that when they know they are up against Paul Trimboli, Vaughan Coveny and the like," he noted.

"In the end I was happy to have 14 men who I asked to perform at the top level, and who responded so well."

Bill Damianos: A superb display from the Olyroo.

COSMOS:Giannasca, Dee, Roberts, Ravanello (Haythornthwaite 61), Moric, Hunter, Kelly, Musitano (Wingell 87), Buljan (Perinovic 90), Popovich, Brown.

SOUTHS: Petkovic, Iosifidis, De Amicis, Blatsis, Panapoulos, Coveny (Boutsianis 65), Trimboli, Damianos, Lozanovski, Baser (Goutzioulis 65), Anastasiadis (Curcija 81).

SCORERS
Cosmos: Hunter 45
Souths: Coveny 33

CROWD: 3,417

POY
3 Giannasca (CC)
2 Damianos (SM)
1 Kelly (CC)

WOMEN'S WRITES

BY JANENE MAR

SASI HAPPY TO SEARCH OTHER FIELDS

Last week, in our feature on AIS selection Natalie Thomas, we saw how an athlete can be transformed into a successful footballer.

Thomas, a state representative golfer, basketballer, hockey player and softballer from Broken Hill was the successful result of ITC/SASI coach Kevin McCormack's willingness to search further afield for new talent.

With the establishment of the ITC program back in 1995, McCormack found his squad was lacking in certain areas, due in part to the small number of players in South Australia (approximately 500 at the time). "When we started, there weren't enough good players," explains McCormack. "They were all playing other sports – and who would think of playing women's soccer anyway?"

His immediate need was for goalkeepers, and McCormack turned his focus to other sports. "In many cases, goalkeepers are big, heavy players, and that's often why they finished up in goals. I had trouble finding tall, athletic keepers and it was something we had to address."

McCormack wrote to 'fellow' SASI coaches in volleyball and netball, hoping for assistance in finding the right type of athlete. "These were the easiest of the skills to crossover – the hand-eye coordination."

The coaches' reaction was naturally not so receptive to his enquiries. "Obviously coaches of other sports want to hang on their own. But I said I don't want your full-timers, just the ones you are getting rid of, to see if we can do something with them. They were not too happy at first or cooperative – they are quite protective of their own. Plus, at the start, the women's soccer program was not taken too seriously (by others).

Since those early days, what has become an ongoing campaign has broadened, and in addition to Thomas, the search has introduced two new players to his SASI squad.

Emma Wirkus was a volleyballer who has made a successful transition as a goalkeeper. Wirkus was named as the all-star keeper at last year's National Junior Championships, and also gained selection in the state youth team.

Rebecca Morrison was offered athletics scholarships as a thrower, and was also a state surf lifesaver. Morrison astounded everyone at last year's national juniors with her absolutely huge throw-ins, which proved a very effective weapon. Morrison had some previous experience in soccer, but the job for McCormack was convincing her to come in to the squad.

"We're making headway," said McCormack. "These have all come in over the last twelve months, so in a way it's starting to happen. Like Natalie Thomas, playing up in Broken Hill, to be honest, she didn't even stand out (as a soccer player). But she was fast, athletic and competitive. She was a talented athlete who learned and picked up the game very quickly."

"Being quick is the first thing," explains McCormack of what he looks for in an athlete. "Then if she can run for a long time, coordination, agility, and can show she can learn quickly."

Despite the success stories, the assignment is no easy task. "It's hard for the girls to believe they can play soccer, transfer over. It helps for them to see others and imagine themselves doing well. But it's not that easy – elite athletes often doubt themselves. When thrown in at the deep end, they can lack confidence."

Making up for that has been Thomas' physical strength, and her great ability to learn, McCormack describing her as "like a sponge" in that respect.

Two state softballers have also joined SASI's junior squad, and are expected to move up into the ITC program within the next year.

"Softballers are often strong and powerful and fast over 10-15 metres, which is suitable to a lot of runs made in a soccer game," he explains.

The junior squad also has a couple of cricketers and sprinters. "This younger group is particularly athletic," says McCormack. "We've had them in since Year 7 and provide them with an enjoyable environment."

Schools are the natural target for budding new talent. SAWSA Development Officer Wendy Carter sets up carnivals through the schools, and McCormack goes in and gives them the opportunity to further their soccer involvement, often inviting youngsters into junior training where they can join their friends and have fun.

"We get them in before they get established in netball or hockey, both who have good programs. But we can show them we've got a good program too – and soccer is the most enjoyable sport in the world.

One other new avenue being explored is Heathfield High School, a sport specific school. With volleyball its number one sport, the school attracts many tall girls. Enter Carter, always on the lookout for prospective new soccer players.

Spreading the word about women's soccer is vital if we are to be automatically considered a natural choice as a female sport.

"Although I've got none yet (hockey players), at least soccer is now seen as an alternative for these girls."

WOMEN'S SOCCER SPREADS ITS WINGS IN QLD

The Queensland Academy of Sport has formalised the concept of searching out talent from other sports with the introduction of its women's soccer talent identification and development injection program.

The QAS has selected an entire team full of athletes with no previous experience in soccer, with the intention of moulding them into competitive footballers. Over a twelve month period they will be nurtured and fast-tracked through the specialised soccer program with the goal of producing new elite players to progress through into representative ranks.

The group is actually competing as a team, entered as the QAS reserve grade team in the Brisbane Premier League. In previous seasons meeting the league requirement of fielding a second team has been difficult, due to a lack in numbers.

With funding from the QAS and the talent search program, the players are not required to make any financial outlay. The venture also receives assistance from Women's Soccer Queensland.

QAS talent identification co-ordinator Chelsea Warr holds the responsibility of facilitating the new venture, with the program overseen by QAS Coach Gary Phillips.

The primary aim behind the program is to identify athletes with the potential to, over the next four years, achieve national and international status in women's soccer. In the process, come the flow-on benefits with greater numbers of females to the game, therefore raising the standard of players and competition at all levels. Add to that a greater general awareness of the sport through the community, and it is clear that everyone can reap the benefits.

The program has been modelled on a similar project undertaken in the USA during the late 1980s, where predominantly track and field athletes and team sport competitors were recruited and developed into soccer players. That initiative produced the ultimate result – some members going on to achieve World Cup success.

In Australia, women's soccer is the first true team sport with a specific talent search program.

The initial national talent search program concentrated on more individualised sports such as cycling and rowing which have a more defined physiological basis, making for a simpler testing and screening process.

The program in other Australian sports has unearthed numerous Olympic and national champions.

Former heptathlete Megan Still had never rowed until identified and given the opportunity in 1988 – and she went on to win world championships and an Olympic gold medal.

With the age groups set at 15-19 years, the criteria for registration into the initial weekend selection camp was attainment of a competitive level in their current sport. Target sports included the team ball sports of netball, basketball, and hockey, as well as athletics, on the premise that these athletes would bring with them already existing attributes – ball handling skills, strong training ethic, competitive nature, and high degree of athleticism.

"In a sense, they come into the program as 'ready made ' athletes, needing only to be trained in the skills and tactical aspects of soccer to achieve success in their new sport," said Warr.

The challenge was how to reach girls competing in other popular sports without causing unnecessary friction with those sports. Naturally unable to directly approach potential candidates, the only means of implementing the all important publicity campaign was through advertisements in the local mainstream press, and general media saturation via print, radio and television. Schools, universities and technical colleges were also another important avenue.

With it comes the job of convincing already successful athletes to try out a sport they may never have previously experienced. In soccer's favour is its Olympic status and, in a way, its smaller (though growing) numbers compared to other traditional female sports.

"I like to refer to it as reshuffling," explains Warr. "In the targeted sports, there is very strong competition for national and international selection due to their large participation numbers. Netball for instance has over 500,000 registered players, but only ten of these will make the national team."

Warr says there are therefore many athletic and competitive women and girls who will not progress further in their chosen sport. Providing them with a chance to achieve success in soccer is the motive behind the program and certainly an important incentive for prospective athletes.

"These athletes can be given the opportunity to transfer their skills in a relatively short amount of time to something they may be better suited to," explained Warr.

Physiological, anthropometric, and technical assessments have been set down, with the specifics of speed, agility, reaction time, endurance and power, as well as an aptitude for soccer considered the necessary attributes. Normative data on elite female soccer players was used as the benchmark to assist in the selection process. Match play situations were added to help assess foot-eye coordination and general matchplay ability and awareness.

For soccer, the general formula for body type has been made position specific: defenders; tall and fast, goalkeepers; agile and long-limbed, and midfielders of high aerobic endurance.

Armed with a comprehensive battery of tests and technical data, the process was put in motion at a two-day selection camp in early December, which saw a total of over seventy budding athletes assemble at Perry Park. The result was the preliminary selection of 24 athletes.

The squad has since been whittled down to a select group of seventeen enthusiastic and motivated players. There are five sprinters, three netballers, three hockey players, three touch players, plus volleyballers, basketballers, and softballers.

Together in training since mid-January, coach Howarth admits he at first had reservations about the program. "Prior to the camp, I was a big sceptical, but afterwards I thought this might work. It's a fast-track coaching system. I'm teaching them the skills, techniques and fundamentals. But I also want to push along the principles of game play."

The debutantes came away from their two pre-season matches with two wins, and made an encouraging start to the Reserve Grade season with a win and a loss. They have shown they are superior in strength, agility and endurance, but not so in skill and the technical aspects, but that will obviously come with experience," said Warr.

"They are learning very, very quickly. We want to get the girls to an elite level quickly, however, a holistic approach to their development has to be adopted in order for it to be successful. The goal is that within three years, one or two of them will make a national squad. In the next two years, may even in just a year, a few will hopefully make state squads. Commitment is the other thing right now."

Training five nights per week has tested that commitment – three sessions on the pitch, and two on strength and conditioning. The group also has wide access to QAS resources and facilities, including dietitian, the athlete career and education program, and sports sciences support.

This system of talent identification will never take over as the sole process of player recruitment, but is an exciting additional avenue in support of the existing programs and procedures.

It is encouraging to see our sport is receptive to such new initiatives, which may prove highly successful, especially for Soccer which is still in its development stages in many areas, compared to the bigger traditional female sports.

The longer term results and information that will be collated from such programs can only help coaches at all levels in future years.

TEAM SCENE
SYDNEY OLYMPIC 1998

UNDER 13

YOUTH LEAGUE

Peter Bouzanis
German Cabrera
Ricky Bertakis
Michael Di Meglio
Ross Fazzalaro
Hassam Habbouchi
Jesse Harvey
Kosta Lagoudakis
Scott Martin
Trent McClenahan
Omar Obeid
Roy Onyewuenyi
John Tsironis
Chris Vais
Grant Wales
Nicholas Stavroulakis

UNDER 14

YOUTH LEAGUE

Jack Benson
Jeffrey Bugallo
Michael Frost
Stephen Hallinan
Gary Karavellas
Paul Knipler
Nicholas Kynezos
Peter Lambert
Anthony Langov
Pearce McGuinness
Joseph Nguyen
Gino Patronaggio
Patrick Polito
Nicholas Tavouktsis
Theofilos Tsakirios
Nicholas Vagenas

TEAM SCENE
SYDNEY OLYMPIC 1998

UNDER 15

YOUTH LEAGUE

Zenon Caravella
Macario De Souza
Daniel Dos Santos
Philip Gregorace
Adrian Hearne
Ben Jarman
Themistoklis Kalathas
Valentino Lastro
Sanjin Mirkovic
Con Pavlidis
Matthew Rosier
Anthony Sarmonikas
Peter Skanavis
Adam Stephenson

UNDER 16

YOUTH LEAGUE

Andrew Barton
Joe Dia
Arthur Diles
Andrew Durante
Lee Hanratty
Mark Lancaster
Bill Madonis
Arthur Mandas
Tallan Martin
Anthony Mazza
Tony Pagliuca
George Pizanis
George Saba
Bruno Silva
Mark Stavroulakis
Andrew Vrahas

Victorian Soccer Federation

PRESTON 0 ALTONA 1

By George Koukeris

Preston hosted three time champions Altona Magic at Goodyear Stadium in an entertaining contest in front of a big crowd.

Preston took action early with some breathtaking attempts by Saso Markovski and Nick Radecki early in the first-half.

In the second stanza the battle for control went Altona's way with Zoran Petrevski and Sash Becvinovski creating havoc for the Lions defence.

Preston too created some fantastic opportunities, but hasty action lead to wasted chances.

In the 68th minute Altona broke through to record the only goal of the match.

A cross by Becvinovski was intercepted by Simon Micevski, who headed past goalkeeper Lupce Acevski.

Preston attempted to fight back late in the game, a move by defender Zoran Drogriski to the forward line troubled the Magic, but he could not find the back of the net.

Lions: Acevski, Drogriski, Stavrevski, Ognenovski, Ivanov, Kuzmanovski (Filipovski), Markovski, A.Burlak, Radecki, Sterjovski (Smirnis), Emsovski.

Magic: McGrath, Runje, Tasevski, Velkovski (Georgopoulos), Micevski, Markovski, Rusmir, Fak, Becvinovski, Trpcevski, Petrevski.

Votes: 3- Fak (AM), 2- Emsovski (PL), 1- Becvinovski (AM).

FAWKNER 2 SOUTH DANDENONG 1

By John De Felice

Fawkner Blues stayed at the top of the table after coming from behind to defeat lowly South Dandenong 2-1.

South Dandenong were in control in the first-half and took the lead three minutes into first-half stoppage-time.

Viktor Memeti was fouled on the goal-line by Frank Tramontana and Carlo Villani scored from the resulting set piece.

The Blues got their act together in the second-half, equalising in the 63rd minute through the league's leading scorer Santo Emmanuele.

Vitale Ferrante supplied Emmanuele from a free-kick and the ace striker found the net from inside the area.

In the 79th minute Ivan Duzel's corner was headed by John Grimaud back to Tony Schipano for the captain to score from close range.

South Dandenong now plummet to the bottom of the table after losing the last seven games straight.

Blues: Gonzales, Tramontana (T.Simsek), Grimaud, P.Ferrante, Schipano, V.Ferrante, Bordignon, Vassiliadis, Emmanuele, Duzel, Sterjovski (K.Simsek).

South: Simpson, Dzaferovski, Zilic, May (Lumanovski), Geri, Parrott (Memedovski), Memeti, Mucaj (Rep), Korcarevski, Villani, Ulusoy.

SUNSHINE GEORGIES 2 SPRINGVALE WHITE EAGLES 2

By Milan Ninovic

Sunshine Georgies came from two goals down to force a 2-2 draw with the struggling Springvale White Eagles at Chaplin Reserve on Sunday.

The White Eagles took a 14th minute lead through an own-goal from Ahmet Gurpinar.

He was put under pressure by Marian Craciun, and his backpass was missed by Steve Wardle.

In the 33rd minute White Eagles went 2-0 ahead with a terrific solo goal by Vince De La Plaza, who dribbled his way through the Georgies defence before chipping Wardle.

Two minutes into the second stanza the Georgies pulled a goal back. Alfonso Opazo beat Robert Marinkovic and, from twelve metres, unleashed a shot that gave Robert Brian no chance.

Substitute John Kanesoulis levelled for the Georgies in the 60th minute when he scored the goal of the game — firing into the top corner from inside the area.

The White Eagles were reduced to ten men when Robert Marinkovic was dismissed in the 85th minute after collecting his second caution of the match.

Georgies: Wardle, Byrne, De Bono (Stojanovski), Komadina (Trpcevski), Krajacic, Gurpinar, Field, Opazo, Vassallo, Dragicevic (Kanesoulis), Magnacca.

White Eagles: Brian, Kitanovski, R.Marinkovic, M.Marinkovic, Calomino, Cvetkovski, Nikolic, Culibrk, Craciun (Rikanovic), Styczen, V.De La Plaza (Kozlica).

Votes: 3 - V. De La Plaza (SWE), 2- Culibrk (SWE),1- Magnacca (SG)

BENTLEIGH 0 BULLEEN 3

By John Rigas

Bulleen Inter Kings steamrolled Bentleigh Greens 3-0 to move themselves into fourth spot on the ladder.

Bulleen had two goals disallowed when Agim Sherifovski and Anthony Grbac found the back of the net.

Inter's athletic forward Eric Hollingsworth opened the scoring after 58 minutes when he headed past goalkeeper Glenn Clarke.

Two minutes later Bulleen increased their lead through striker Danny Gnijdic after Grbac and Hollingsworth combined to set Gnijdic up, who had all the time in the world.

The former Heidelberg player then scored his second in the 60th minute after Grbac supplied the striker with a wonderful ball.

Sadly, Bentleigh goal-keeper Clarke had to be carried from the ground after he crashed into the post attempting to save a Gnjidic header in the 85th minute. Captain Stelios Drakos took over in goal, by this time the Greens had used all their substitutes.

Greens: Clarke, Drakos, Karapatsos (Feehan), Van Egmond, Papettas, Spence, Rossios (Oter), Kotsovolos (Charalambous).

Lions: Keogh, Mazzini, Valentic, Della Rocca, Everetts, Stojcevski, Atanasovski (Guglielmi), Grbac, Sherifovski, Gnijdic, Hollingsworth.

Votes: 3- Gnijidic (BK), 2- Hollingsworth (BK), 1- Grbac (BK).

In the other Premier League game of the weekend Moorabbin City scored an upset win over high-flying St Albans Saints at Churchill Reserve on Sunday.

It was easily Moorabbin's best game this season in accounting for the second-placed Saints.

"We dominated 80% of the game," said Moorabbin coach Michael Lynn.

"I think that St Albans underestimated us."

Veteran Steve Marley missed a penalty for City right on the stroke of half-time, denied by a terrific save from Saints keeper Marijan Vunderl.

Substitute Liam Caffrey scored the winner in the 50th minute, scoring with his hip after a corner was cleared and knocked back into the area.

STATE LEAGUE DIVISION ONE ROUND 1 RESULTS

Lalor United	2	Springvale City	5
Doncaster Rovers		Richmond	
Altona East	1	Western Suburbs	0
North Geelong Warriors		Ringwood City	
Melton Reds	0	Westvale	11
Westgate	1	Kingston City	1
Werribee City	4	Northcote City	0

ROUND 2 FIXTURES Sunday March 29

Kingston City	v	Werribee City
Melton Reds	v	Westgate
Ringwood City	v	Westvale
North Geelong Warriors	v	Springvale City
Western Suburbs	v	Lalor United
Northcote City	v	Doncaster Rovers
Altona East	v	Richmond

STATE LEAGUE DIVISION TWO ROUND 1 RESULTS

Oakleigh	4	Essendon Bruns. Royals	0
Knox City	2	Regent Bulla	0
Broadmeadows City	4	Melbourne City	4
Cranbourne	0	Yarraville/Glen Eira	1
East Richmond	3	Old Scotch Waverley	1
Maroondah Arrows	2	Mooroolbark	2
Altona City	0	Frankston Strikers	3

ROUND 2 FIXTURES Saturday March 28

Old Scotch Waverley	v	Maroonday Arrows
Yarraville/Glen Eira	v	East Richmond
Frankston Strikers	v	Cranbourne
Melbourne City	v	Altona City
Knox City	v	Broadmeadows City
Mooroolbark	v	Oakleigh
Regent Bulla	v	Essendon Bruns. Royals

STATE LEAGUE DIVISION THREE ROUND 1 RESULTS

Banyule City	0	Keysborough	1
North Coburg Utd	0	Stonnington City	1
Keilor Park	1	South Werribee	3
Fitzroy City	1	Frankston Pines	3
Pascoe Vale	1	South Springvale	3
Bell Park	0	Geelong	2

Chelsea v Diamond Valley United - postponed

ROUND 2 FIXTURES Saturday March 28

Chelsea	v	Bell Park
Pascoe Vale	v	Diamond Valley United
Frankston Pines	v	South Springvale
South Werribee	v	Fitzroy City
Keilor Park	v	Stonnington City
Geelong	v	Keysborough
Banyule City	v	North Coburg United

LEADING SCORERS

9	Emmanuele (Fawkner Blues)
8	Gnjidic (Bulleen Inter Kings)
7	Lazarevski (Thomastown Zebras)
5	Becvinovski (Altona Magic)
	Papettas (Bentleigh Greens)
	S.Rados (St Albans Saints)
4	Mezensof (South Dandenong)
	Lingurovski (Thomastown Zebras)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Fawkner Blues	9	7	2	0	20	8	23
St Albans Saints	9	6	1	2	16	7	19
Altona Magic	9	6	1	2	12	6	19
Bulleen Inter Kings	9	4	4	1	13	7	16
Bentleigh Greens	9	4	2	3	8	10	14
Sunshine Georgies	9	4	1	4	9	13	13
Thomastown Zebras	8	3	2	3	15	11	11
Green Gully Cavaliers	8	3	2	3	12	8	11
Springvale White Eagles	9	3	2	4	9	13	11
Port Melbourne Sharks	8	3	1	4	13	11	10
Preston Lions	9	3	1	5	9	11	10
Moorabbin City	9	2	1	6	9	18	7
Heidelberg United	8	1	1	6	6	16	4
South Dandenong	9	1	1	7	11	23	4

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STATE LEAGUE DIVISION FOUR ROUND 1 RESULTS

Western Eagles	3	Nunawading City	0
Melton	1	Moreland City	2
Clifton Hill United	1	Langwarrin	2
Seaford United	3	South Caulfield	2
Sandringham City	0	Sunbury United	0
Geelong Rangers	0	Corio	1
Williamstown	2	South Wantirna	1

ROUND 2 FIXTURES
Saturday March 28

Sunbury United	v	South Wantirna
South Caulfield	v	Sandringham City
Clifton Hill United	v	Seaford United
Langwarrin	v	Moreland City
Corio	v	Nunawading City
Western Eagles	v	Melton

Sunday March 29

Williamstown	v	Geelong Rangers

PROVISIONAL LEAGUE DIVISION ONE ROUND 1 RESULTS

Templestowe Eagles	1	Riversdale	1
Endeavour United	4	Springvale Condors	0
Glenroy	1	Lalor	4
North Sunshine Eagles	1	Mitcham United	1
Lyndale United	2	Monbulk	0
Croxton Park	bye		
Brandon Park	bye		

ROUND 2 FIXTURES
Saturday March 28

Monbulk	v	Brandon Park
North Sunshine Eagles	v	Lyndale United
Croxton Park	v	Mitcham United
Springvale Condors	v	Glenroy
Endeavour United	v	Templestowe Eagles
Lalor	bye	
Riversdale	bye	

No Go New Zealand

By Stuart Jones

The Soccer Australia Board last Saturday considered and rejected the Auckland Kings' application to join the NSL.

In a press conference held just prior to the Olyroo game at Parramatta Stadium, SA Chairman, Mr David Hill, stated: "It could not be established that the bid contributed, financially or otherwise, significantly enough to the advancement of the Ericsson Cup. The option is available to re-apply next, or in subsequent, years. That leaves us with at this stage a 15 team competition.

"We looked at the status of a lot of clubs, but unless the situation deteriorates, we saw insufficient grounds for excluding any of the existing 14 teams. We have also agreed to a process whereby we want to put to the clubs new targets for entry and position in the league and also let the clubs know over the next three years progressively that clubs who can not attain those standards will be omitted from future leagues.

"This is to set higher standards, but we want to do this in consultation with the league and the existing clubs."

Mr Hill was unwilling to mention those clubs most in danger of failing these new standards.

At the same time Mr Hill admitted Soccer Australia, whilst not having official confirmation, did not expect to have Terry Venables back as national coach once his current contract expires. However they are still working on other options and opportunities for him to be involved with the Socceroos. There is also to be a review of the coaching structure of the four national levels, more details of which will come later.

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Brisbane Banter

By Glenn Davis

XXXX league giants Brisbane Lions tasted defeat for the first time this season. It was to newcomers Gold Coast leaving rivals Brisbane City alone at the top of the winter competition.

Gold Coast, who were admitted to the expanded 10-team XXXX competition by the Queensland Soccer Federation this season, bounced back from their first loss when they crashed 2-1 to Rochedale Rovers in the previous round.

Gold Coast joined Brisbane Lions in equal second place courtesy of a second-half goal from striker Brett Adams after both sides fought out a tight opening first half in humid conditions.

Gold Coast's brilliant start to the season is fast making many Brisbane clubs take notice, especially as they possess a lightning fast attack in Adams, Troy Greenwood and Peter Grierson, who already has caught the attention of Brisbane Strikers' coach Frank Farina.

Although they now share equal second, the win wasn't enough to overhaul Brisbane Lions' superior goal difference.

★★★

In another upset, **Ipswich Knights** continued **Rochedale Rovers'** inconsistent start with a comfortable 3-1 home win at Eric Evans Reserve. Rochedale were humiliated 4-nil by Brisbane City but picked themselves up off the carpet to restore some pride in the glamour club when they downed Gold Coast in the previous round.

Rochedale coach Peter Bannon feared the heat and Ipswich's pride and passion as their biggest danger and he was proved correct with both predictions.

To the joy of Ipswich fans, their prodigal son, former State player Peter Vogler added his name to the score sheet along with defender Pat Boyle and John Clark.

Rochedale's solitary strike came from talented Kiwi Michael Legg in the first half.

★★★

Brisbane City's Chris Slater extended his lead as the league's top goalscorer with his fifth goal of the season in his side's decisive 2-nil win over **Mt Gravatt**.

Mt Gravatt have made their presence felt in the XXXX league after being the other side admitted this year and did well to hold Brisbane City scoreless at half-time.

However, Slater's presence and another second-half goal from Warren Cooley proved the difference between the two sides.

★★★

In other matches, young guns **Taringa Rovers** had a comfortable 3-1 away victory over **Beenleigh**, while **Bundaberg** picked up its first win of the season downing **Wynnum** 4-1.

"Healthy Diet — Try It"

PREMIER LEAGUE RESULTS
Round 9:

St Albans Saints 0 - Moorabbin City 1 (L.Caffrey)
Preston Lions 0 - Altona Magic 1 (Micveski)
Bentleigh Greens 0 - Bulleen Inter Kings 3 (Gnjidic 2, Hollingsworth)
Fawkner Blues 2 (Schipano, Emmanuele) - South Dandenong 1 (Villani)
Sunshine Georgies 2 (Opazo, Kanesoulis) - Springvale White Eagles 2 (R.Marinkovic, og)

PREMIER LEAGUE FIXTURES
Round 10
Saturday March 28

South Dandenong v Sunshine Georgies - Ross Reserve - kick off 5.00pm
Altona Magic v Bentleigh Greens - Paisley Park - kick off 7.30pm
Moorabbin City v Preston Lions - Kingston Heath Soccer Complex - kick off 5.00pm
Port Melbourne Sharks v St Albans Saints - Anderson Reserve - kick off 8.00pm

Sunday March 29

Springvale White Eagles v Heidelberg United - Serbian Sports Centre - kick off 5.00pm
Thomastown Zebras v Green Gully Cavaliers - Partridge Reserve - kick off 5.00pm

Monday March 30

Bulleen Inter Kings v Fawkner Blues - Veneto Club - kick off 8.30pm

Soccer Canberra

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By Graham Cooke

QUEANBEYAN LIFT CUP

Queanbeyan City set the scene for what may well be an ACT season of surprises by beating Monaro 2-1 in the annual Mayor's Cup challenge match.

City had not beaten its opponent in three previous outings in the competition, and this did not appear a good year to start, with a Monaro opponent packed with quality and among the early favourites for a play-off place.

But Queanbeyan has recruited some talent of its own for this campaign, and two of its new signings, played a major role in the game.

Japanese student Yuki Onda, who played in Weston Creek's youth side last year, scored the crucial second goal, but it is to tall, no-nonsense central defender Paul Reid that City owes its greatest debt.

Reid, who came with coach Oscar Langone from Canberra City, gave Queanbeyan what it had lacked last season: solidity in the back-line. His football was not always pretty to watch, but it was almost always effective against a Monaro side whose sound approach work was continually ruined by poor finishing.

Queanbeyan took the lead, completely against the run of play, in the 11th minute through Denny Gorgievski. Within 10 minutes Monaro's Jimmy Baxter had a shot kicked off the line and forced a fine save from City goalkeeper Jovan Naumovski.

Instead of the expected Monaro equaliser, Onda put Queanbeyan further ahead shortly after half-time, and it was not until five minutes from the end that veteran Joe Gagetti finally found his way through — and that from a rebound after Naumovski had parried his first shot.

City's afternoon was marred by the late sending off of Jose Torales, but in the end its new-found resolution added an adornment to a previously empty trophy cabinet.

For Langone, there could not have been a better beginning with his new club. "Last week we had two games — one a 2-2 with Cringila, in Wollongong, which I was very pleased with," he said.

"Then we lost 7-0 to the University of Canberra. Okay, we had a few reserves in, but we were back to our old habits. I told the players that if they had lapses like that they could forget about doing anything in the Premier League.

"It looks like I managed to motivate them ... if they can perform like today, we are in for a good season."

The Mayor of Queanbeyan, Frank Pangallo (right) presents has trophy to the coach of Queanbeyan City, Oscar Langone, after City had beaten Monaro 2-1.

Queanbeyan City players and officials after the club's first win over Monaro in the Mayor's Cup.

BRYANT QUITS AT 45

Veteran defender Steve Bryant has been ordered to bring his ACT Premier League playing career to a close by the club he will coach this season, Canberra City.

Bryant, who at 45 was the league's oldest player last season as he turned out regularly for Monaro, said he had been ready to pull on a shirt again in 1998.

"I thought I could still do a good job coming off the bench, but City told me I should concentrate on the coaching side," he said.

Obviously that's where my future in soccer lies, and I am grateful of the chance City gave me to get back into it, so I'll be leaving the boots at home."

Bryant came to Canberra to play for the Arrows in the early 1980s after spells with Portsmouth and Birmingham in England, and quickly became a fixture in the club's defence.

His first taste of coaching came when he took over in Canberra City Olympians' last few weeks in the NSL in 1986. He remained with the club for two more seasons in the NSW League, then had a spell with Belconnen United, before taking over as player-coach of Tuggeranong United.

While he brought that club success on the field, its finances were a continuing cause of concern. He once remarked that every time he won a trophy Tuggeranong cut his wages.

He eventually moved on as a player to Monaro under Ian Heywood, before the City offer came along.

Bryant said he will probably give veterans' soccer a miss. "It's best I devote my entire attention to coaching City," he said.

"We have a lot of young players and my two assistants, Peter Thompson and Alan Strachan, are rookie coaches, so I'll need to be heavily involved in all three grades.

"Yes, not playing will be a wrench, but I'm still involved in soccer, and that's the important thing."

Well said Steve and congratulations from ABSW on a terrific innings.

Steve Bryant: Coach of Canberra City.

SOCCER HITS THE AIRWAVES

Soccer achieved a breakthrough on ACT radio when the long-running program 'Soccer Scene' made its debut on a commercial station.

After years with the sporting network, SSSFM, and a stint with the the ABC on 2CN, 'Soccer Scene' is now running on 2CC in a late Saturday morning time slot.

The program is owned by Steve Doszpot, whose relationship with the media goes back to the days when he organised publicity for Canberra City in the fledgling National League.

He will continue to compere the show, together with ABSW's Graham Cooke, but said his role as president of Soccer Canberra and vice-chairman of the Canberra Cosmos might lead to difficulties.

"For that reason we hope to have other regular presenters, including Tony Brennan, who does the ground announcing work for us at Cosmos home games," he said.

"Initial reaction to the program has been positive, and we are already receiving suggestions that it should be extended from its present 20 minutes.

"Our aim is a year-round program, concentrating on the Cosmos during the summer, and the local competition over the winter months.

"It fits in with Soccer Canberra's policy of obtaining a good media mix for the code, including local radio, television and newspapers, our revamped promotional magazine 'Capital Soccer', and of course ABSW."

SSSFM continues to support soccer with 'Boot and Balls', an hour-long show on Sunday evenings.

Canberra Cosmos defender Jason Dunn rehearses for 2CC's Soccer Scene.

COSMOS BACK AT BRUCE

There are still parts which look like a building site, but for the majority of the more than 3000 fans who watched the game against South Melbourne last Monday night, the Cosmos were home.

The old arguments about playing there remain. And the spectators are going to look even more lost in the vastness now that extra seating has been installed over where, long ago, men and women ran and set records in the Pan Pacific Games and World Athletics Cup.

On a fine night most chose to use the new seats, with the result the original stand was almost totally deserted. On the other side, the old Hill Stand is still half demolished, and is not expected to be ready until at least the beginning of the next Ericsson Cup season.

But whatever its faults, Bruce is still the home of national league, just as it was when Baz Giampaolo, Tony Brennan and Terry Bryne delighted crowds of 9,000 or more in the pioneering days of the National League.

Against South Melbourne Brennan was back, as the match day compere, interviewing another Canberra favourite of the past, 1974 Socceroo Harry Williams, and setting the scene on a stage he knows so well.

Whether it was the atmosphere of Bruce, or the inspiration of new coach Rale Rasic, the Cosmos put on a show for the home supporters against opposition which was expected to sweep them aside. At any rate, Rasic paid the venue the complement of being "this beautiful, magnificent stadium" in an expansive after-match interview.

There is a long, long way to go, but the evening may well have been sufficient to send a few people away with a renewed belief in big-time soccer, some 20 years after it was first played at the ACT's premier sporting venue.

Canberra Cosmos deputy chairman Steve Doszpot, welcomes back senior Soccer Australia official Stefan Kamasz to the newly renovated Bruce Stadium.

Referees' seal of approval. Referees' inspector George Dobbin (right) and Clive Mackillop, referees' liaison officer for the Canberra Cosmos, admire the new facilities.

Italian Affair

By Joe Russo

MOST EXCITING SERIE A IN YEARS

Juventus, Lazio and Inter all have a good chance of winning this year's 'scudetto' (championship). It is the first time in a while that the race for the championship has been so exciting.

Furthermore, last week Juventus qualified for the semi-finals of the Champions' League and both Inter and Lazio qualified for the semis of the UEFA Cup (details on page 22).

For a while the Serie A was dominated by AC Milan under coach Fabio Capello, with Juventus winning the championship in the years when AC Milan missed out.

The respective coaches, Lippi (Juventus), Ericsson (Lazio) and Simoni (Inter) will be working overtime finding the right combinations in their star line-ups.

Lazio have the dilemma of having three strikers: Mancini, Casiraghi and Boksic but Ericsson prefers two up-front so Casiraghi and Mancini have been alternating on the bench lately.

Inter have a wealth of foreign talent but their midfield is very unsettled. In fact, besides Pagliuca in goal, the veteran captain Bergomi as sweeper/libero and Ronaldo, the rest of the line-up seems up for grabs just about every week.

Juventus are much more stable than their Milan rivals. Then again the key to the success of Juventus throughout their history has been stability during the season followed by a wholesale sell-off of key players in the close-season.

Juventus, at this stage, should still be slight favourites, with the likes of Del Piero, Inzaghi, Pessotto, Zidane, Davids, Peruzzi, Montero, Dimas and Co. with the ability to make sure of this.

JUVE IN COURT

It has been reported that Juventus is to sue 'Il Messaggero', a leading daily paper in Rome.

The newspaper, widely available throughout Italy, has a reputation as one of the best in the business and is anything but a tabloid.

Juventus are reportedly seeking about A$10 million in damages for comments made by the paper's sports editor Pietro Calabrese. The comments, allegedly defamatory, have been made consistently over a period of time.

The newspaper is refusing to comment on the story and who could blame them. Their reputation is second to none.

It is all very sad when one of the world's leading soccer teams thinks that it is above criticism. What would they do if they played in the Premier League in England and had to constantly deal with the Fleet St 'press' working for the notorious tabloids?

ITALIAN CUP UPDATE

The finals of the Italian Cup will be played on a home-and-away basis on April 8 and 29. It will see the form side Lazio up against AC Milan.

The Milan giants were extremely lucky to qualify after drawing 2-2 with Parma. Their equalising goal, by Patrick Kluivert, came in the 93rd minute. They go through on away-goals rule after the first-leg ended scoreless.

Lazio meanwhile held Juventus to a 2-2 draw and the Romans now go through 3-2 on aggregate (injury riddled Juve were forced to field an under-strength team).

The winner of the Cup qualifies for next year's Cup Winners' Cup in Europe, but should Lazio earn a place in the Champions' League by either winning the championship or finishing second — which is fairly likely at this stage — then AC Milan would automatically qualify for the Cup Winners' even if they don't win the Italian Cup!

It sounds complex but it translates thus: AC Milan is likely to play in Europe next year despite their indifferent form in the Serie A this season.

So for Fabio Capello's men, the season is not a write off ... not just yet anyway!

PANUCCI TO AC MILAN?

It just won't go away! Christian Panucci, the Italian defender playing with Real Madrid, has once again been linked to Milan.

The young defender is into his second season with Spanish giants but has very close ties with Fabio Capello.

When Panucci had a fall-out with then Milan coach Arrigo Sacchi last season he followed Capello over to Madrid.

Capello returned to Italy this year and the player stayed behind.

Panucci is not in the best of form at the moment, but this won't worry Capello, he knows how to get the best out of him.

The rumour has now surfaced for the third time. The first time the stumbling block was Real's high asking price, the second time it was Panucci himself who was reportedly happy at Madrid, and now? Well, you know what they say about third time lucky!

LOMBARDO 'DOES A VIALLI'

They both played for Sampdoria and for Juventus, they played for Italy, were both rejected by Italian national coaches Sacchi and then Maldini and they were both sold by Juve when their Serie A 'expiry date' was up.

Let's go on! They were both sold to London clubs (Crystal Palace and Chelsea) and now are player/coaches, even if only in caretaker roles, after the departure of their respective coaches.

What next? Well, they both sort-of speak English, have the same hairstyle (which resembles a 'lunar-landscape') ... the mind just boggles at the possibilities!

INTER CELEBRATE 90 YEARS

Recently Inter celebrated its 90th birthday in the lavish Palazzo Marino in Milan.

All the big names were remembered: Meazza, Mazzola, Lorenzi, Suarez, Picchi, Facchetti, Skoglund, Corso and of course the late and legendary coach Helenio Herrera.

Representing AC Milan, their city rivals, was none other than Franco Baresi, a player ironically Inter rejected as a junior because he was "too small". As they say the rest is history!

Happy birthday Inter, but I'm sure the best present that club president Massimo Moratti could receive would be the 'scudetto'. Their last one was in 1989.

ROUND 27 PREVIEW

Juventus v Milan

Always a classic encounter between two of the heavyweights of world soccer, especially in recent years. The Delle Alpi Stadium in Turin will be packed and given this year's form the black and whites should sneak a win.

Udinese v Lazio

Two of the revelations in this year's Serie A. Udinese are mixing it with the big boys this season while Lazio will be out to avenge their 2-3 first round loss in Rome.

Roma v Parma

While both teams are not in the race for the championship, they are nevertheless in good form and up in the high echelons of the Serie A table. It should be a game well worth keeping an eye on.

In Other Games:

Lecce v Atalanta
Brescia v Bari
Sampdoria v Bologna
Piacenza v Empoli
Fiorentina v Napoli
Inter v Vicenza

Greek News

By Andrew Akratos

SEX AND GOALS

What in the world? A week ago Nikos Dabizas transferred from AEK to Newcastle in the dream transfer of a lifetime. But how things change.

Just seven days later, St James Park is tottering under allegations of financial improprieties, sex romps and fan ridicule aimed at none other than the club's chairman, Douglas Hall (son of owner Sir John) and president Freddy Sheffield.

Dabizas

The club's horror run on the field continues with a midweek 1-2 loss to Crystal Palace, and with Sir John coming out of retirement to take up the reins once again, this fine old club is in for a relegation fight.

Nikes Dabizas, welcome to your new life in Geordieland!

WHEN THE FAT LADY SINGS

As the song says, it ain't over till the fat lady sings, and never was a truer word spoken.

AEK's dream of European glory came to a heartbreaking climax in injury-time and as the cold descended onto an icy pitch so did the gloom on Greece's last European warrior for 1998. So near, yet so far and it's onto to 1999 and new dreams of success.

After a hard fought battle for supremacy, defender Igor Chugainov headed a goal deep into injury time to give Lokomotiv Moscow a dramatic 2-1 win and a place in the European Cup Winners' Cup semi-finals.

Chugainov's close-range header snatched a deserved victory for unfashionable Lokomotiv after a 0-0 draw in their quarter-final first-leg two weeks ago in Athens.

Lokomotiv had been on the brink of elimination on the away-goals rule after having two goals disallowed for offside on a freezing evening in Moscow, but threw players forward in desperation in the dying stages.

Russian international Yevgeny Kharlachev put Lokomotiv ahead in the 55th minute with a low shot, which curled beyond the reach of goalkeeper Ilias Atmatsidis and just inside the post.

But Christos Kopitsis' 68th minute penalty quickly wiped out the advantage after Christos Maladenis was brought down in a crowded penalty area.

Kopitsis: Penalty taker.

Lokomotiv's success was the second delight for Russian fans this week after Spartak Moscow eliminated Ajax Amsterdam in the UEFA Cup on Tuesday.

Demis Nikolaidis could have taken the game out of Lokomotiv's reach in the 82nd minute but his shot was deflected past the post by goalkeeper Ruslan Nigmatullin — who is on loan from Spartak — and was Lokomotiv's hero in the first leg.

Luck seemed to have deserted Lokomotiv when two goals forced home from close range were ruled offside.

But Chugainov, unmarked just in front of goal, had the simplest of tasks to stretch out and nudge the ball into the net after a goalmouth scramble in what turned out to be almost the last action of the match.

AEK's Romanian coach Dumitru Dumitiou praised his players' performance in the second-half, but said Lokomotiv were worthy winners.

Lokomotiv Moscow: 27-Ruslan Nigmatullin; 2-Andrei Solomatin, 5-Alexei Arifullin, 6-Igor Chugainov, 8-Sergei Gurenko, 4-Yevgeny Kharlachev, 10-Igor Cherevchenko, 15-Vladimir Maminov, 26-Alexei Kosolapov, 16-Oleg Garas, 20-Dmitry Loskov (18-Zaza Zhanashia 25).

AEK Athens: 1-Ilias Atmatsidis; 12-Christos Kopitsis, 3-Michalis Kasapis, 26-Stelios Manolas, 25-Yannis Kalitzakis, 2-Trianafylos Macheridis, 5-Nikos Kostenoglou, 8-Tony Savevski (27-Kelvin Sebwe 66), 24-Arnar Gretarson, 11-Demis Nikolaidis, 7-Christos Maladenis (23-Evagelos Kefalas 88).

Andrei Solomatin (right) of Lokomotiv Moscow takes the ball from Michail Kasapis of AEK Athens .

IN BRIEF

Busy month for Greece and their new coach with a friendly scheduled on April 8 against Romania and followed by a match against Morocco on the 24th ... Not satisfied with one Greek on their books, Newcastle have been making inquiries at Sheffield United about Vasili Borbokis with a view to a move to St James' Park to join compatriot Nikos Pabizas ... ENIC have earmarked $5 million for transfers to boost AEK's playing stocks after the recent transfers of several star players ... Rumour has it that Liverpool are interested in acquiring a new keeper and the man they would like most to wear their famous red shirt is non other than goalkeeper Ilias Atmatsidis (AEK) and an offer of around $5.5 million is imminent ... PAO coach Dusan Bayevic is at a loss to explain why two Ghanaians (unnamed) who were offered trials with the club, and accepted, are now are two weeks overdue and with whereabouts unknown ... An all-in player and spectator riot at Rizoupouli marred Apollon's fine 2-0 over Athinaikos. The result has given the club breathing space in the relegation battle ... Zoumboulis of PAOK is being chased by three English clubs — Stoke City, Wolves and Leicester City with a transfer around $500,000 involved ... With 13 games left Aris and Panelefsiniakos have opened a four point lead over promotion rivals in Division Two ... Two weeks to the title decider between perennial rivals PAO and Olympiakos.

TOP SCORERS

24: H. Waziecha (PAO)
21: I. Ivic (Olympiakos)
17: G.X. Georgiadis (PAO)
14: D. Nikolaidis (AEK)
K. Frantzeskos (PAOK)

MY KINGDOM FOR THE CUP

Well, well, well. The minnows have almost done it. Unfancied Panionios has managed a 1-1 at PAOK to go through to the Greek Cup final 2-1 on aggregate.

Nalintzis gave the visitors an early goal (and a 2-0 lead) and by the time Vrizas equalised in the 82nd it was far too late.

Sweet revenge for Panionionos who lost the 1989 final 3-1 to PAOK.

In the other semi-final, Panathinaikos were predictably comfortable 3-0 winners over Iraklis. The Thessalian team tried hard but could not match the class of the potential double winners.

In the end, goals by Waziecha (48th), Georgiadis (74th) and despite heroic efforts by Iraklis, Lymberopoulos put the seal on the win with the third goal after 80 minutes.

So, that's how it all ended and the cup final is an all Athenian derby between the greens of PAO and the blue of Panionios.

Around the Globe

ENGLAND

DIVISION ONE

Middlesbrough	3	Norwich	0
Birmingham	1	Notts Forest	1
Bury	1	Oxford United	0
Crewe	0	Charlton	3
Ipswich	3	Wolves	0
Man City	0	Sheff United	0
Reading	0	Huddersfield	2
Stoke City	2	QPR	1
Sunderland	2	Portsmouth	1
Swindon	1	Stockport Cty	1
Tranmere	3	Bradford	1
WBA	2	Port Vale	2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
N Forest	38	14	2	3	43	19	9	6	4	22	15	77
Midboro	38	14	3	2	41	10	8	6	5	23	26	75
Sun'land	38	11	6	2	40	18	10	4	5	30	22	73
Charlton	38	12	5	1	37	15	7	4	9	30	32	66
Ipswich	38	10	4	4	36	17	7	9	4	27	21	64
Sheff Utd	36	13	4	1	34	13	3	10	5	20	24	62
B'ham	39	8	6	5	22	14	7	8	5	29	19	59
Wolves	37	11	5	3	32	18	5	3	10	13	21	56
Stockport	39	12	5	2	41	17	4	2	14	20	38	55
WBA	39	8	6	6	21	21	6	5	8	18	24	53
Swindon	40	9	5	6	26	21	5	4	11	13	38	51
Oxford	39	10	5	4	31	16	4	3	13	22	36	50
Bradford	39	9	8	2	22	15	3	6	11	17	27	50
Crewe	39	7	2	11	21	33	7	3	9	24	24	47
Hud'sfield	39	7	4	8	24	23	5	5	10	20	34	45
Norwich	39	7	8	5	20	24	4	4	11	17	36	45
Bury	39	6	9	5	18	19	3	9	7	18	27	45
QPR	39	8	7	5	27	19	2	6	11	17	36	43
Tranmere	37	7	6	5	24	18	4	4	11	16	28	43
Port Vale	39	6	6	8	22	22	5	3	11	24	34	42
P'mouth	38	7	5	8	24	28	4	3	11	17	25	41
Man City	39	5	5	10	22	22	5	5	9	20	24	40
Stoke	39	6	5	8	24	31	3	8	9	14	27	40
Reading	39	7	4	9	25	29	3	5	11	11	39	39

DIVISION TWO

Blackpool	2	Gillingham	1
Brentford	0	Northampton	0
Bristol R	2	Preston	2
Chesterfield	2	Carlisle	1
Luton Town	2	Grimsby	2
Millwall	1	Burnley	0
Oldham	2	Watford	2
Plymouth	2	Bristol C	0
Southend	5	Bournemouth	3
Walsall	1	Wigan	0
Wrexham	2	Wycombe	0
York City	0	Fulham	1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Watford	39	11	5	3	32	20	10	8	2	26	14	76
Bristol C	38	14	4	2	37	15	7	5	6	23	16	72
Wrexham	38	10	7	2	28	19	7	5	7	20	23	63
Grimsby	36	10	6	2	28	9	7	5	6	22	20	62
North'ton	39	13	4	3	30	14	3	10	6	14	16	62
Fulham	38	10	6	3	22	10	7	3	9	26	24	60
Gillingham	38	11	5	3	25	16	5	4	10	21	28	57
Bristol R	39	9	2	8	32	31	6	7	7	24	28	54
Millwall	38	7	6	6	20	18	7	3	9	19	26	51
Chest'field	39	10	6	3	24	16	2	9	9	12	21	51
Oldham	37	11	6	1	35	17	1	8	10	15	26	50
B'mouth	38	9	7	4	25	14	4	4	10	24	33	50
Blackpool	38	11	6	3	32	22	3	2	13	16	34	50
Wycombe	39	10	7	2	29	16	2	7	11	17	33	50
York	39	9	4	6	24	18	3	10	7	22	32	50
Preston	38	8	4	7	22	21	4	6	9	23	26	46
Walsall	36	8	7	3	21	12	4	3	11	15	29	46
Wigan	37	8	4	6	30	28	4	4	11	20	29	44
Plymouth	38	8	5	6	30	25	2	7	10	17	34	42
Brentford	39	8	6	5	29	22	1	9	10	12	37	42
Carlisle	39	7	5	7	23	23	4	3	13	28	36	41
Southend	39	8	6	6	28	25	3	2	14	17	43	41
Luton	38	4	7	9	26	36	5	7	6	17	18	41
Burnley	37	6	9	3	26	18	2	3	14	15	32	36

DIVISION THREE

Brighton	0	Cambridge	2
Doncaster	2	Lincoln	4
Hull City	0	Cardiff	1
Leyton O	2	Darlington	0
Macclesfield	2	Shrewsbury	1
Mansfield	3	Exeter City	2
Notts Cty	0	Colchester	0
Peterboro	2	Chester City	1
Rochdale	2	Hartlepool	1
Scunthorpe	1	Rotherham	1
Swansea	0	Scarborough	0
Torquay	0	Barnet	0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Notts Cty	39	11	6	2	30	16	14	4	2	37	19	85
Torquay	39	13	3	4	35	19	7	6	6	26	28	69
M'field	39	16	4	0	34	9	2	8	9	18	30	66
Barnet	39	10	6	3	32	17	8	5	7	22	23	65
Scarboro	39	13	4	3	41	22	5	6	8	21	29	64
Lincoln	38	8	7	4	25	21	8	6	5	23	23	61
Peterboro	39	11	5	4	34	16	5	7	7	25	26	60
Colchester	39	12	4	4	34	19	4	6	9	26	33	58
Rotherham	39	9	6	4	35	27	5	10	5	21	23	58
Leyton O	38	12	4	3	33	14	4	6	9	17	21	58
Chester	39	10	6	4	28	12	5	3	11	24	35	54
Exeter	39	8	8	4	32	22	5	6	8	26	30	53
Scunthorpe	38	7	7	5	24	23	7	4	8	23	25	53
Mansfield	39	9	7	3	35	22	4	6	10	18	26	52
Hartlepool	39	9	10	1	34	18	2	8	9	17	26	51
Cambridge	39	8	7	4	31	24	3	9	8	21	25	49
Cardiff	39	5	11	3	26	18	4	10	6	20	23	48
Shrewsbury	37	10	2	6	29	22	2	9	8	21	29	47
Darlington	38	11	5	3	35	22	1	5	13	13	39	46
Rochdale	39	11	3	5	30	13	2	2	16	11	35	44
Swansea	39	6	7	6	19	15	5	2	13	23	40	42
Hull	39	7	5	7	30	29	1	1	18	15	44	30
Brighton	39	2	8	10	16	30	3	5	11	13	26	28
Doncaster	39	2	3	15	12	45	1	4	14	14	56	16

SCOTLAND

PREMIER LEAGUE

Aberdeen	0	**Celtic**	1
		Burley 45p	
Dundee Utd	0	**Hearts**	1
		Hamilton 8	
Hibernian	1	**Motherwell**	0
Lavety 34			
Kilmarnock	3	**Dunfermline**	0
Wright 62p			
Nevin 65			
McIntyre 69			
Rangers	2	**St Johnstone**	1
Negri 27		Kerhaghan 15	
Thern 56			

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Celtic	29	10	2	2	35	8	9	3	3	20	11	62
Hearts	29	9	3	2	32	19	9	3	3	31	18	60
Rangers	29	11	4	0	41	15	5	5	4	22	18	57
Kilmarnock	29	7	3	4	19	17	3	6	6	14	29	39
St Johnstone	29	5	4	6	16	19	4	3	7	14	18	34
Dundee Utd	29	5	5	4	20	12	2	6	7	18	30	32
Aberdeen	29	5	5	5	17	15	2	4	8	15	31	30
Dunfermline	29	4	7	4	22	25	3	2	9	12	33	30
Motherwell	29	5	3	6	22	22	3	2	10	16	28	29
Hibernian	29	5	3	7	22	20	0	5	9	10	30	23

DIVISION ONE

Airdrie	1	Stirling	0
Morton	1	Partick	0
Hamilton	1	Dundee	2
Raith	0	Ayr Utd	0
St Mirren	1	Falkirk	2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Dundee	29	7	5	3	17	8	11	3	0	29	8	62
Falkirk	29	7	3	4	23	17	8	3	4	24	19	51
Raith	29	8	4	2	21	7	6	4	5	22	19	50
Airdrie	29	8	5	2	21	14	4	6	4	14	16	47
Hamilton	29	4	6	5	16	21	5	3	6	22	22	36
St Mirren	29	6	2	6	19	19	3	4	8	16	25	33
Morton	29	5	3	6	17	20	3	5	7	20	24	32
Ayr	29	5	3	7	22	23	2	5	7	8	23	29
Stirling	29	2	7	6	18	29	4	3	7	19	21	28
Partick	29	2	4	8	22	30	3	6	6	14	19	25

DIVISION TWO

Brechin	0	Clyde	2
Caledonian	0	Queen Sth	3
Livingston	2	East Fife	2
Stenhousemuir	0	Clydebank	0
Stranraer	4	Forfar	0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Clydebank	29	6	5	4	19	15	7	6	1	18	9	50
Livingston	28	7	3	3	24	17	6	6	3	22	15	48
Stranraer	29	7	3	5	31	20	5	4	5	17	18	43
Queen Sth	28	7	5	2	20	12	5	2	7	26	25	43
Sten'muir	29	6	5	4	23	21	4	3	7	13	19	38
East Fife	29	6	2	6	23	29	5	3	7	17	22	38
Caledonian	29	5	6	4	27	20	4	3	7	30	25	36
Forfar	29	5	4	6	24	24	4	4	6	20	30	35
Clyde	29	4	4	6	16	21	3	6	6	17	25	31
Brechin	29	4	5	5	15	19	2	5	8	18	34	28

DIVISION THREE

Alloa	3	Albion	1
Berwick	1	Ross Cty	1
Cowdenbeath	1	Queen's Park	2
Dumbarton	1	Arbroath	2
Montrose	1	East Stirling	1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Alloa	28	10	0	4	32	16	8	2	4	27	18	56
Arbroath	28	8	4	2	33	17	7	2	5	22	17	51
Ross Cty	28	7	3	3	34	16	7	5	3	22	14	50
E Stirling	29	9	2	4	25	14	5	3	6	14	21	47
Albion	27	7	3	2	24	15	4	2	9	23	39	38
Queen's Pk	29	5	2	8	19	26	4	6	4	14	14	35
Berwick	28	4	6	5	20	22	4	4	5	17	20	34
Cow'beath	29	5	1	9	13	23	5	0	9	14	24	31
Montrose	29	3	4	8	19	28	5	2	7	23	36	30
Dumbarton	29	0	5	9	11	24	5	4	6	25	27	24

BELGIUM

Lokeren	2	Lommel	1
Genk	1	Harelbeke	0
Standard Liege	2	Westerlo	2
Ghent	1	Anderlecht	1
Lierse	2	Beveren	0
Molenbeek	2	Antwerp	0
Charleroi	0	Sint-Truiden	0
Germinal Ekeren	2	Aalst	3
Excelsior Mouscron	0	Club Bruges	1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bruges	27	22	4	1	61	21	70
Genk	27	18	4	5	58	29	57
Ekeren	27	14	5	8	50	39	47
Harelbeke	27	12	9	6	43	26	45
Lokeren	27	14	1	12	55	54	43
Anderlecht	27	12	7	8	43	31	43
Lierse	27	12	6	9	43	34	42
Lommel	27	10	6	11	41	41	36
Standard	27	8	10	9	38	36	34
St-Truiden	27	8	9	10	24	29	33
Ghent	27	7	12	8	36	37	33
Aalst	27	8	7	12	40	50	31
Charleroi	27	8	7	12	37	49	31
Westerlo	27	7	10	10	40	45	31
Mouscron	27	7	7	13	29	40	28
Beveren	27	5	8	14	23	42	23
Molenbeek	27	6	4	17	29	63	22
Antwerp	27	4	6	17	26	50	18

CROATIA

The regular 12-club championship is now split in two. The six clubs in group A play-off for the championship, the sides in Group B play to stay in the premier league.

Group A

Croatia	6	Zadarkomers	1
Hajduk	2	Osijek	0
Zagreb	2	Hrv.Dragovoljac	2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Croatia	1	1	0	0	6	1	28
Hajduk	1	1	0	0	2	0	25
Zagreb	1	0	1	0	2	2	22
Dragovoljac	1	0	1	0	2	2	19
Osijek	1	0	0	1	0	2	16
Zadarkomerc	1	0	0	1	1	6	14

Group B

Slaven Belupo	1	Mladost 127	0
Rijeka	0	Sibenik	0
Varteks	1	Samobor	0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Varteks	1	1	0	0	1	0	15
Belupo	1	1	0	0	1	0	15
Rijeka	1	0	1	0	0	0	14
Mladost	1	0	0	1	0	1	12
Samobor	1	0	0	1	0	1	11
Sibenik	1	0	0	1	0	0	10

(Note Points totals include half of those won during the regular season).

FRANCE

French Cup Quarter-Finals

Bourg-Peronnas (IV)	0	Olympique Lyon	1
Caen (II)	1	RC Lens	2
Paris St Germain	1	Monaco	0
En Avant Guingamp	1	Mulhouse (II)	0

GERMANY

VfB Stuttgart	0	Bayern Munich	0
Werder Bremen	3	VfL Wolfsburg	0
Hansa Rostock	2	MSV Duisburg	0
Karlsruhe SC	0	Hamburg SV	1
1860 Munich	2	B M'gladbach	0

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Around the Globe

GERMANY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
K'slautern	26	17	6	3	49	27	57
Bayern	27	15	6	6	52	30	51
Leverkusen	26	12	10	4	52	30	46
Schalke	26	11	11	4	32	22	44
Stuttgart	27	11	8	8	44	37	41
H Rostock	27	11	6	10	39	34	39
Werder	27	10	8	9	35	41	38
Dortmund	26	9	8	9	45	41	35
Duisburg	27	9	8	10	36	35	35
Hertha Berlin	26	9	6	11	31	42	33
Bochum	26	8	7	11	30	37	31
Cologne	26	9	4	13	41	50	31
1860 Munich	27	8	7	12	34	45	31
Hamburg	27	7	9	11	30	38	30
Wolfsburg	27	8	5	14	32	42	29
Karlsruhe	27	7	8	12	37	48	29
B M'gladbach	27	6	9	12	42	49	27
Bielefeld	26	7	4	15	33	43	25

GREECE

Kalamata	0	Kavala	2
OFI Iraklion	3	Panionios Athens	0
Panathinaikos	3	PAOK	1
Xanthi	2	Paniliakos Pyrgos	0
Ethnikos Piraeus	0	Veria	1
Ionikos Piraeus	1	Proodeftiki	0
Athinaikos	3	Panahaiki Patras	2
Iraklis Thessaloniki	0	Olympiakos	2

Playing on Monday
AEK Athens v Apollon Athens

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Olympiakos	27	23	1	3	70	18	70
Panathinaikos	27	22	1	4	74	22	67
AEK	26	18	5	3	48	23	59
PAOK	27	16	6	5	49	31	54
Ionikos	27	16	6	5	42	21	54
Iraklis	27	13	7	7	42	33	46
OFI	27	11	3	13	37	46	36
Paniliakos	27	9	8	10	37	36	35
Xanthi	27	10	5	12	42	46	35
Apollon	26	9	5	12	24	33	32
Veria	27	9	5	13	30	37	32
Panionios	27	9	3	15	32	40	30
Panahaiki	27	8	3	16	24	48	27
Proodeftiki	27	6	5	16	28	53	23
Athinaikos	27	6	5	16	21	43	23
Ethnikos	27	7	1	19	20	42	22
Kalamata	27	5	6	16	18	39	21
Kavala	27	5	5	17	26	51	20

HOLLAND

Groningen	0	Twente Enschede	1
NAC Breda	0	Ajax Amsterdam	2
Sparta Rotterdam	1	RKC Waalwijk	0
Willem II Tilburg	2	MVV Maastricht	0
Graafschap Doetinchem	2	Volendam	1
PSV Eindhoven	3	Vitesse Arnhem	2
Fortuna Sittard	3	Utrecht	1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ajax	25	22	2	1	79	11	68
PSV	25	16	8	1	68	29	56
Feyenoord	24	13	6	5	42	28	44
Heerenveen	25	13	5	7	41	34	44
Vitesse	24	12	6	6	55	40	42
Willem II	26	12	4	10	44	39	40
Fortuna	26	12	4	10	38	41	40
Breda	25	10	4	11	30	30	34
Twente	25	8	9	8	28	27	33
Graafschap	26	8	8	10	35	29	32
Sparta	26	8	8	10	43	46	32
Nijmegen	25	10	1	14	29	47	31
Utrecht	25	9	3	13	46	54	30
Roda	25	7	6	12	34	35	27
Groningen	26	6	8	12	32	44	26
Maastricht	26	6	4	16	24	59	22
Waalwijk	26	4	6	16	27	54	18
Volendam	26	3	6	17	22	70	15

ITALY

Atalanta	1	Empoli	0
Bari	0	Sampdoria	1
Fiorentina	1	Bologna	1
Lazio	0	Piacenza	0
Napoli	2	Lecce	4
Parma	2	Juventus	2
Udinese	3	Brescia	1
Vicenza	1	AS Roma	1

PORTUGAL

Chaves	0	Salgueiros	0
Vitoria Setubal	2	Camp'rense	1
Rio Ave	1	Estrela Amadora	0
Braga	3	Varzim	1
Farense	0	Maritimo	2
Vitoria Guimaraes	0	Benfica	1
Academica	1	Leca	1
Boavista	4	Belenenses	0
Sporting Lisbon	2	Porto	0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Porto	26	18	5	3	53	26	59
Benfica	26	15	7	4	44	22	52
Guimaraes	26	13	5	8	34	20	44
Sporting	26	11	9	6	31	22	42
Estrela	26	11	7	8	34	29	40
Boavista	26	10	10	6	37	24	40
Maritimo	26	11	7	8	31	26	40
Salgueiros	26	10	8	8	36	28	38
Rio Ave	26	10	8	8	32	30	38
C'rense	26	9	6	11	38	41	33
Leca	26	9	5	12	25	37	32
Braga	26	7	10	9	35	36	31
Setubal	26	8	7	11	29	31	31
Farense	26	6	12	8	33	38	30
Varzim	26	5	10	11	22	37	25
Academica	26	5	10	11	19	31	25
Chaves	26	5	4	17	22	49	19
Belenenses	26	2	8	16	14	42	14

SPAIN

Barcelona	4	Athletic Bilbao	0
Deportivo Coruna	2	Real Zaragoza	1
Racing Santander	1	Valladolid	2
Mallorca	4	Celta Vigo	2
Real Sociedad	2	Real Betis	0
Tenerife	1	Oviedo	0
Sporting Gijon	0	Merida	0
Valencia	0	Espanyol	0
Real Madrid	2	Compostela	1
Salamanca	5	Atletico Madrid	

SWITZERLAND

Lausanne Sports	1	FC Zurich	2
Grasshoppers	2	St Gallen	2
Lucerne	0	Servette	0
Sion	0	Aarau	0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Grasshoppers	4	2	1	1	10	7	30
Servette	4	2	2	0	4	2	28
Lausanne Sports	4	0	2	2	1	4	23
Aarau	4	1	2	1	6	6	23
FC Zurich	4	2	1	1	8	5	22
St Gallen	4	1	3	0	4	3	21
Lucerne	4	0	3	1	4	5	18
Sion	4	0	2	2	1	6	17

(Note: Points totals include half-points from prelim round)

YUGOSLAVIA

Obilic Belgrade	2	B Podgorica	0
Crvena Zvezda	5	Proleter Zrenjanin	1
Partizan	4	Zeleznik Belgrade	0
Vojvodina	3	Mladost Lucani	1
Zemun Belgrade	1	Hajduk Kula	0
Rad Belgrade	2	Cukarick Belgrade	1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Obilic	23	19	3	1	52	14	60
C-Zvezda	23	19	2	2	62	16	59
Partizan	23	16	3	4	60	27	51
Vojvodina	23	11	6	6	46	45	39
Zemun	23	8	6	9	27	37	30
Rad	23	8	5	10	23	27	29
Cukaricki	23	7	3	13	27	29	24
Hajduk	23	6	4	13	22	41	22
Zeleznik	23	6	3	14	31	47	21
Mladost	23	6	3	14	18	43	21
Proleter	23	6	1	16	27	49	19
Buducnost	23	3	7	13	19	39	16

CZECH REP

Viktoria Zizkov	1	Viktoria Plzen	0
Banik Ostrava	3	Hradec Kralove	0
Ceske Budejovice	2	Teplice	0
Bohdanec	1	Sigma Olomouc	2
Slovan Liberec	0	Sparta Prague	1
Dukla Prague	1	Kaucuk Opava	0
Patra Drnovice	4	Boby Brno	0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sparta Prague	20	16	3	1	34	11	51
Slavia Prague	19	11	5	3	29	12	38
Sigma Olomouc	20	10	4	6	23	15	34
Banik Ostrava	20	8	8	4	30	23	32
Boby Brno	20	9	4	7	29	24	31
Jablonec	19	8	6	5	28	19	30
Slovan Liberec	20	8	5	7	26	26	29
Viktoria Zizkov	20	7	5	8	18	18	26
Petra Drnovice	20	7	5	8	28	32	26
Dukla Prague	20	7	4	9	27	32	25
Hradec Kralove	20	6	5	9	17	25	23
Teplice	20	5	7	8	19	19	22
Kaucuk Opava	20	5	7	8	23	27	22
Ceske Budejovice	20	6	4	10	20	31	22
Viktoria Plzen	20	6	3	11	23	30	21
Bohdanec	20	2	1	17	10	40	7

HUNGARY

Ferencvaros	1	Vasas Budapest	0
Zalaegerszeg	1	Gazszer Agard	2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ujpest	22	14	5	3	37	17	47
Ferencvaros	22	13	4	5	39	25	43
Gyor Eto	22	12	7	3	31	17	43
MTK	22	11	6	5	37	20	39
Vasas	22	12	3	7	42	31	39
FC Vac	22	10	4	8	30	35	34
Diosgyor	22	10	3	9	32	23	33

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WORLD CUP FOOTBALL
FRANCE 1998

'FIRST ROUND' CHAMPIONSHIP – FOLLOWING ENGLAND & SCOTLAND

DEPART 9 JUNE
10 JUNE UNTIL 27 JUNE
16 NIGHTS

DATE	MATCHES		
12/6/98	PARAGUAY	vs	BULGARIA
15/6/98	ENGLAND	vs	TUNISIA
16/6/98	SCOTLAND	vs	NORWAY
19/6/98	SPAIN	vs	PARAGUAY
22/6/98	ENGLAND	vs	ROMANIA
23/6/98	SCOTLAND	vs	MOROCCO
25/6/98	HOLLAND	vs	MEXICO

PACKAGE PER PERSON INCLUDES:
- RETURN ECONOMY AIRFARES
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- 16 NIGHTS ACCOMMODATION
- TRANSFERS TO & FROM THE AIRPORTS, HOTELS & STADIUMS BY LUXURY COACH
- FULLY ESCORTED

PACKAGE PRICE PER PERSON (TWIN SHARE)	*** TOURIST	**** SUPERIOR TOURIST
CATEGORY 3	$7,357.00	$7,997.00
Single Supplement	$1,280.00	$1,920.00

'FIRST & SECOND ROUND'

DEPART 9 JUNE
10 JUNE UNTIL 13 JULY
32 NIGHTS

AS PER FIRST ROUND MATCH ITINERARY FOLLOWED BY THE SECOND ROUND MATCH ITINERARY.

PACKAGE PER PERSON INCLUDES:
- RETURN ECONOMY AIRFARES
- 15 STADIUM TICKETS INCLUDING, 10 FIRST & SECOND ROUND, 2 QUARTER FINALS, 1 SEMI FINAL, 3RD & 4TH PLACE & FINAL
- 32 NIGHTS ACCOMMODATION
- TRANSFERS TO & FROM THE AIRPORTS, HOTELS & STADIUMS BY LUXURY COACH
- FULLY ESCORTED

PACKAGE PRICE PER PERSON (TWIN SHARE)	*** TOURIST	**** SUPERIOR TOURIST
CATEGORY 3	$14,123.00	$15,403.00
Single Supplement	$2,560.00	$3,840.00

'FINAL' CHAMPIONSHIP

DEPART 7 JULY
8 JULY UNTIL 15 JULY
7 NIGHTS

DATE	MATCHES	PLACE
8/7/98	SEMI FINAL	PARIS - S.D.
11/7/98	3 & 4 PLACE FINAL	PARIS - P.D.P.
12/7/98	FINAL	PARIS - S.D.

PACKAGE PER PERSON INCLUDES:
- RETURN ECONOMY AIRFARES
- 3 STADIUM TICKETS INCLUDING, 10 FIRST & SECOND ROUND, 2 QUARTER FINALS, 1 SEMI FINAL, 3RD & 4TH PLACE & FINAL
- 7 NIGHTS ACCOMMODATION
- TRANSFERS TO & FROM THE AIRPORTS, HOTELS & STADIUMS BY LUXURY COACH
- FULLY ESCORTED

PACKAGE PRICE PER PERSON (TWIN SHARE)	*** TOURIST	**** SUPERIOR TOURIST
CATEGORY 3	$6,499.00	$6,799.00
Single Supplement	ON REQUEST	ON REQUEST

All packages are based ex Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane. Applicable addons for other capital cities. First Class, Business Class and Round World options are available. Recommended Prices Only. Prices may vary due to Exchange Rates.

SA PH: (08) 8211 7866

WORLD CUP FOOTBALL
FRANCE 1998

'FIRST ROUND' CHAMPIONSHIP – FOLLOWING ITALY

DEPART 9 JUNE
10 JUNE UNTIL 27 JUNE
16 NIGHTS

DATE	MATCHES		
11/6/98	ITALY	vs	CHILE
13/698	SOUTH KOREA	vs	MEXICO
14/6/98	YUGOSLAVIA	vs	IRAN
17/6/98	ITALY	vs	CAMEROON
21/6/98	USA	vs	IRAN
23/6/98	ITALY	vs	AUSTRIA
25/6/98	GERMANY	vs	IRAN

PACKAGE PER PERSON INCLUDES:
- RETURN ECONOMY AIRFARES
- 7 FIRST ROUND TICKETS
- 16 NIGHTS ACCOMMODATION
- TRANSFERS TO & FROM THE AIRPORTS, HOTELS & STADIUMS BY LUXURY COACH
- FULLY ESCORTED

PACKAGE PRICE PER PERSON (TWIN SHARE)	*** TOURIST	**** SUPERIOR TOURIST
CATEGORY 3	$6,947.00	$7,647.00
Single Supplement	$1,280.00	$1,920.00

'FIRST & SECOND ROUND'

DEPART 9 JUNE
10 JUNE UNTIL 13 JULY
32 NIGHTS

AS PER FIRST ROUND MATCH ITINERARY FOLLOWED BY THE SECOND ROUND MATCH ITINERARY.

PACKAGE PER PERSON INCLUDES:
- RETURN ECONOMY AIRFARES
- 15 STADIUM TICKETS INCLUDING, 10 FIRST & SECOND ROUND, 2 QUARTER FINALS, 1 SEMI FINAL, 3RD & 4TH PLACE & FINAL
- 32 NIGHTS ACCOMMODATION
- TRANSFERS TO & FROM THE AIRPORTS, HOTELS & STADIUMS BY LUXURY COACH
- FULLY ESCORTED

PACKAGE PRICE PER PERSON (TWIN SHARE)	*** TOURIST	**** SUPERIOR TOURIST
CATEGORY 3	$13,713.00	$15,053.00
Single Supplement	$2,560.00	$3,840.00

'SECOND ROUND' CHAMPIONSHIP

DEPART 26 JULY
27 JULY UNTIL 13 JULY
16 NIGHTS

DATE	MATCHES	PLACE
27/6/98	SECOND ROUND	MARSEILLE
29/6/98	SECOND ROUND	MONTPELLIER
30/6/98	SECOND ROUND	ST. ETTIENNE
03/7/98	QUARTER FINAL	PARIS - S.D.
04/7/98	QUARTER FINAL	LYON
07/7/98	SEMI FINAL	MARSEILLE
11/7/98	3 & 4 PLACE FINAL	PARIS - P.D.P.
12/7/98	FINAL	PARIS - S.D.

PACKAGE PER PERSON INCLUDES:
- RETURN ECONOMY AIRFARES
- 8 STADIUM TICKETS INCLUDING, 3 SECOND ROUND, 2 QUARTER FINALS, 1 SEMI FINAL, 3RD & 4TH PLACE & FINAL
- 16 NIGHTS ACCOMMODATION
- TRANSFERS TO & FROM THE AIRPORTS, HOTELS & STADIUMS BY LUXURY COACH
- FULLY ESCORTED

PACKAGE PRICE PER PERSON (TWIN SHARE)	*** TOURIST	**** SUPERIOR TOURIST
CATEGORY 3	$9,666.00	$10,306.00
Single Supplement	$1,280.00	$1,1920.00

All packages are based ex Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane. Applicable addons for other capital cities. First Class, Business Class and Round World options are available. Recommended Prices Only. Prices may vary due to Exchange Rates.

Weird & Wonderful

By Stuart Jones

1959-60

With Wolves and Tottenham winning their final games of the season (5-1 away at Chelsea and 4-1 at home to Blackpool respectively), the scene was set for a big finale as Burnley faced a trip to Manchester City to take out the title.

Not even a draw was good enough in this scenario, as Wolves would win on the 'for and against'. Burnley went to Maine Road and completed the task by defeating City 2-1, and were crowned champions for the first time since 1920/21 — only the second time in their long history. Tottenham finished third, a point behind Wolverhampton.

At the bottom, Luton finished last but the battle for the other spot was much tighter. Leeds were second last and took on Nottingham Forest in their final game (another team who had been involved in the relegation battle). They won 1-0 at Elland Road and while this was not enough to relegate Forest, it would have sent Birmingham down if they were beaten well enough in their final clash with Blackburn Rovers. Unfortunately for the Yorkshire team Birmingham won the game 1-0, thereby sending Leeds down.

Aston Villa won promotion at their first attempt, although winning the championship went down to the last game. Villa lost 3-0 away at fourth from bottom Plymouth Argyle, leaving the door open for Cardiff, provided they won full points at home against Bristol Rovers. It was too much for Cardiff though as they could only draw 2-2 against a team playing for pride. Consolation came from the fact they were promoted anyway.

At the bottom, Hull City and Bristol City were relegated. Division One leading goalscorer was Dennis Violet of Manchester United with 32 goals, whilst Brian Clough from Middlesbrough top scored in the Second Division with 39 goals.

Division Three hosted another tight race for top spot but thanks to a 2-0 home win over Bradford City on the final day, Southampton were crowned champions. For Norwich City, their 3-0 win on that same day against Chesterfield was not enough to make them number one, but number two was adequate for promotion.

York City saw all the hard work go up in smoke as they finished fourth last and were relegated. In comparison, the team that had squeezed into second the previous season — Coventry — finished fifth in Division Three, whilst Shrewsbury, who ended-up fourth previously, had an improved third place as their reward.

Down with York went Mansfield, Wrexham, and Accrington Stanley.

Division Four winners were Walsall with Notts County, Torquay and Watford all winning promotion. Hartlepools finished bottom by a point, with Oldham just ahead. However, over the off-season both sides were re-elected, however third from bottom Gateshead were rejected from the Football League.

For the last time England would only have one major domestic cup being competed for: the FA Cup. Blackburn defeated Sheffield Wednesday 2-1 in one semi-final whilst Wolves won 1-0 over local rivals Aston Villa. At Wembley, McGrath put his team behind by scoring an own goal in the 41st minute. Things were not helped for Blackburn when they lost Dave Whelan with a broken leg. With a one man advantage, Deeley added a brace of goals to the scoreline and Wolves (managed by Stan Cullis) were able to gain some consolation from missing out on the league by taking home the FA Cup. The scoreline? Wolverhampton Wanderers 3 Blackburn Rovers 0.

The Southern League now had a Premier League and a Division One, and with its 44 members, it was the largest in the history of their League.

Bath City won the very first title under this new format, finishing 13 points clear of Headington United. City scored 116 goals in 42 games and were led by Charlie Fleming, Ted Burdon, and Peter Willshire. At the bottom, Kettering's world had fallen apart. After being runners-up in the north-west section the previous season, they finished last this term, winning just nine of their matches.

Essex's representation in Division One — minimal compared to that of the Kent sides — did not stop their teams' success as Clacton and Romford finished first and second respectively. With four going up (replacing relegated Nuneaton Borough, Barry Town, Poole Town, and Kettering Town), Folkestone Town in third were also promoted as would have been Exeter City Reserves. However, Exeter decided to pull their reserve side out of the competition (this was the last time a reserve side played in the Southern League).

Sittingbourne had been set to finish in the top five, however, on the last day Guildford City won by enough to move them into fifth on goal average. This was vital as City won promotion in place of Exeter's second team. Rugby Town finished bottom but continued in the league, unlike Kidderminster Harriers who left the competition for their local league and would not be seen in this competition again for another 12 seasons.

For the third time in the Southern League Cup Final's history, Chelmsford City met Worcester. It stood at one win apiece however Chelmsford's 4-2 aggregate win pushed the slate in their favour, and, more importantly, handed them the Southern League Cup.

In Scotland, after one brief season away, Hearts returned to the top of the table in Division One. Kilmarnock were runners-up, four points behind. Hearts scored 102 goals in 34 games and only rivals Hibernian scored more with 106 (although they only managed to finish seventh).

At the bottom, Arbroath went down after winning only four of their games and conceding 106 goals. Stirling Albion found their vertigo problems had returned as they were once again relegated.

In Division Two it was St Johnstone who won the title of Champions and also, more importantly, took up a promotion place. Second spot was close with Dundee United's 1-0 win on the final day against Berwick Rangers enough to see off Queen of the South (who won 4-0 away at poor old Cowdenbeath) and Hamilton, who lost 1-2 to Dumbarton at home. Cowdenbeath finished bottom conceding 124 goals in just 36 games, gaining only 14 points and being on the wrong end of a scoreline 28 times.

The League Cup Final in Scotland resulted in Hearts taking another honour by defeating Third Lanark 2-1 in the Final. They were only the third side in Scotland, alongside Dundee and Celtic, to successfully defend the League Cup. However, they would not do the domestic treble as they were knocked out of the SFA in a second-round replay by Kilmarnock (the same round as cup holders St Mirren went out after drawing 1-1 and 4–4 with Celtic; they lost 2-5 in the second replay!).

'Killie' actually made it all the way to the semi-finals and then put two goals past Clyde with no reply to make the Final.

The other semi-final had been an 'Auld Firm' derby and had finished 1-1. Rangers then came out four days later and thumped their great rivals by four goals to one. The Final, played at Hampden Park on April 23, was all Rangers as they won 2-0 to take home the Scottish FA Cup ... once more.

Around Europe the Champions were:

Austria: SK Rapid Wien (Cup - FK Austria)
Belgium: Lierse SK
Bulgaria: CDNA Sofia (Cup - Septemvri CDW Sofia)
France: Stade de Reims (Cup - AS Monaco)
East Germany: Vorwarts Berlin (Cup - Motor Jena)
West Germany: Hamburger SV (Cup - Borussia M'gladbach)
Holland: Ajax
Italy: Juventus FC (Cup double)
Poland: Ruch Chorzow
Portugal: Benfica (Cup - OS Belenenses)
Romania: CCA Bucuresti (Cup - Ariesul Turda)
Russia: Torpedo Moskva (Cup double)
Spain: CF Barcelona (Cup - Club Atletico de Madrid)
Sweden: IFK Norrkoping
Switzerland: BSC Young Boys Berne (Cup - FC Luzern)

ENGLAND

LEAGUE TABLES

DIVISION 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Burnley	42	15	2	4	52	28	9	5	7	33	33	55
Wolves	42	15	3	3	63	28	9	3	9	43	39	54
Tott'am	42	10	6	5	43	24	11	5	5	43	26	53
WBA	42	12	4	5	48	25	7	7	7	35	32	49
Sheff Wed	42	12	7	2	48	20	7	4	10	32	39	49
Bolton W	42	12	5	4	37	27	8	3	10	22	24	48
Man Utd	42	13	3	5	53	30	6	4	11	49	50	45
Newcastle	42	10	5	6	42	32	8	3	10	40	46	44
Preston	42	10	6	5	43	34	6	6	9	36	42	44
Fulham	42	12	4	5	42	28	5	6	10	31	52	44
Blackpool	42	9	6	6	32	32	6	4	11	27	39	40
Leichester	42	8	6	7	38	32	5	7	9	28	43	39
Arsenal	42	9	5	7	39	38	6	4	11	29	42	39
West Ham	42	14	3	6	47	33	4	3	14	28	58	38
Everton	42	13	3	5	50	20	0	8	13	23	58	37
Man C	42	11	2	8	47	34	6	1	14	31	50	37
B'burn	42	12	3	6	38	29	4	2	15	22	41	37
Chelsea	42	7	5	9	44	50	7	4	10	32	41	37
Bir'ham	42	9	5	7	37	36	4	5	12	26	44	36
N Forest	42	8	6	7	30	28	5	3	13	20	46	35
Leeds	42	7	5	9	37	46	5	5	11	28	46	34
Luton	42	6	5	10	25	29	3	7	11	25	44	30

DIVISION 2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
A Villa	42	17	3	1	62	19	8	6	7	27	24	59
Cardiff	42	15	2	4	55	36	8	10	3	35	26	58
Liverpool	42	15	3	3	59	28	5	7	9	31	38	50
Sheff Utd	42	12	5	4	43	22	7	7	7	25	29	50
Midboro	42	14	5	2	56	21	5	5	11	34	43	48
Hud'sfld	42	13	3	5	44	20	6	6	9	29	32	47
Charlton	42	12	7	2	55	28	5	6	10	35	59	47
Roth'ham	42	9	9	3	31	23	8	4	9	30	37	47
Briston R	42	12	6	3	42	28	6	5	10	30	50	47
Leyton O	42	12	4	5	47	25	3	10	8	29	36	44
Ipswich	42	12	5	4	48	24	7	1	13	30	44	44
Swansea	42	12	6	3	54	32	3	3	14	28	52	40
Lincoln C	42	11	3	7	41	25	5	4	12	34	53	39
Brighton	42	7	8	6	35	32	6	4	11	32	44	38
Sc'thorpe	42	9	7	5	38	26	4	3	14	19	45	36
Sun'land	42	8	6	7	35	29	4	6	11	17	36	36
Stoke	42	8	3	10	40	38	6	4	11	26	45	35
Derby	42	9	4	8	31	28	5	3	13	30	49	35
Plymouth	42	10	6	5	42	36	3	3	15	19	53	35
P'mouth	42	6	6	9	36	36	4	6	11	23	41	32
Hull	42	7	6	8	27	30	3	4	14	21	46	30
Bristol C	42	8	3	10	27	31	3	2	16	33	66	27

DIVISION 3

Southampton 61, Norwich City 59, Shrewsbury Town 52, Grimsby Town 52, Coventry City 52, Brentford 51, Bury 51, QPR 49, Colchester United 47, Bournemouth 47, Reading 46, Southend United 46, Newport County 46, Port Vale 46, Halifax Town 46, Swindon Town 46, Barnsley 44, Chesterfield 43, Bradford City 42, Tranmere Rovers 41, York City 38, Mansfield Town 36, Wrexham 36, Accrington Stanley 27.

DIVISION 4

Walsall 65, Notts County 60, Torquay United 60, Watford 57, Millwall 53, Northampton Town 53, Gillingham 52, Crystal Palace 50, Exeter City 49, Stockport County 49, Bradford 49, Rochdale 46, Aldershot 45, Crewe Alexandra 45, Darlington 43, Workington 42, Doncaster Rovers 42, Barrow 41, Carlisle United 41, Chester 40, Southport 34, Gateshead 33, Oldham Athletic 28, Hartlepools United 27.

SOUTHERN LEAGUE PREMIER DIVISION

Bath City 67, Headington United 54, Weymouth 53, Cheltenham Town 48, Cambridge City 47, Chelsmford City 45, Bedford Town 45, King's Lynn 45, Boston United 44, Wisbech Town 44, Yeovil Town 42, Hereford United 42, Tonbridge 40, Hastings United 40, Wellington Town 37, Dartford 37, Gravesend & Northfleet 36, Worcester City 36, Nuneaton Borough 33, Barry Town 33, Poole Town 28, Kettering Town 28.

SOUTHERN LEAGUE DIVISION 1

Clacton Town 4, Romford 53, Folkestone Town 51, Exeter City (Res) 49, Guildford City 46, Sittingbourne 47, Margate 46, Trowbridge Town 45, Cambridge United 45, Yiewsley 44, Bexleyheath & Welling 43, Merthyr Tydfil 42, Ramsgate Athletic 40, Ashford Town 40, Tunbridge Wells United 39, Hinckley Athletic 36, Gloucester City 35, Dover 34, Kidderminster Harriers 34, Corby Town 33, Burton Albion 32, Rugby Town 31.

SCOTLAND

DIVISION 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Hearts	34	23	8	3	102	51	54
Kilmarnock	34	24	2	8	67	45	50
Rangers	34	17	8	9	72	38	42
Dundee	34	16	10	8	70	49	52
Motherwell	34	16	8	10	71	61	40
Clyde	34	15	9	10	77	69	39
Hibernian	34	14	7	13	106	85	35
Ayr U	34	14	6	14	65	73	34
Celtic	34	12	9	13	73	59	33
Patrick T	34	14	4	16	54	78	32
Raith R	34	14	3	17	64	62	31
T Lanark	34	13	4	17	75	83	30
Dunfermline A	34	10	9	15	72	80	29
St Mirren	34	11	6	17	78	86	28
Aberdeen	34	11	6	17	56	80	28
Stirling A	34	7	8	19	55	72	22
Arbroath	34	4	7	23	38	106	15

DIVISION 2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
St Johnstone	36	24	5	7	87	47	53
Dundee U	36	22	6	8	90	45	50
Queen of South	36	21	7	8	94	52	50
Hamilton A	36	21	6	9	91	62	48
Stenhousemuir	36	20	4	12	86	67	44
Dumbarton	36	18	7	11	67	53	43
Montrose	36	19	5	12	60	52	43
Falkirk	36	15	9	12	77	43	39
Berwick R	36	16	5	15	62	55	37
Albion R	36	14	8	14	71	78	36
Queen's Park	36	17	2	17	65	79	36
Brechin C	36	14	6	16	66	66	34
Alloa	36	13	5	18	70	85	31
Morton	36	10	8	18	67	79	28
E Stirling	36	10	8	18	68	82	28
Forfar A	36	10	8	18	53	84	28
Stranraer	36	10	3	23	53	79	23
East Fife	36	7	6	23	50	87	20
Cowdenbeath	36	6	2	28	42	124	14

UK STORIES

Compiled by Micky Brock

HALL TO GO

Douglas Hall has decided to quit the Newcastle United board ahead of more harmful revelations about his private life, to be published this weekend.

Newcastle's vice-chairman and major shareholder is bowing to mounting pressure from angry Geordie fans in the light of allegations of sleaze surrounding him and chairman Freddy Shepherd. A crisis meeting in London yesterday of the football club's plc insisted that Hall's position was untenable.

It is understood that Shepherd was also ready to step down, especially in the light of Newcastle's 2-1 home defeat by Crystal Palace, which plunged them deep into relegation trouble. But there is considerable support for Shepherd within the club.

He is being asked to ride the storm, which erupted in a 25-minute demonstration by about 200 fans in front of the main entrance after the Palace game. Both men had stayed away from St James' Park for the match.

UNITED CHASE HUCKERBY

Man United are attempting to sign Coventry City's $11 million-rated forward Darren Huckerby before this Thursday's deadline.

Old Trafford manager Alex Ferguson made his move after their European Champions' League exit against Monaco.

He believes England B and U/21 cap Huckerby could give his faltering side extra impetus in their attempt to land a fifth Premiership title in six years.

Huckerby, 21, was snatched from Newcastle United for just $3m in November 1996 and has scored a string of spectacular solo goals this season. One of them came in the final minute against United in December and condemned the champions to a 3-2 defeat at Highfield Road.

The deal could hinge on Coventry being able to persuade Dion Dublin to sign a new contract, which would tie the former Man United player to Highfield Road for the rest of his career.

Transfer News

Player	From	To	Cost
Nikolaos Dabizas	Olympiakos	Newcastle Utd	$4m
Andrew Roberts	C Palace	Wimbledon	$3.2m
James Clapham	Tottenham	Ipswich	$600,000
Marlon Beresford	Burnley	Middlesbrough	$600,000
Paul Devlin	Birmingham	Sheffield Utd	$400,000
Ifern Onuora	Gillingham	Swindon	$240,000
Jason Van Blerk	Manchester C	WBA	$200,000
Craig Midgley	Bradford C	Hartlepool Utd	$20,000
Gary Martindale	Notts Cty	Rotherham Utd	Nominal
David Kerslake	Ipswich	Swindon	Free
Damian Hilton	Norwich C	Brighton	Free
Richard Jobson	Leeds Utd	Manchester C	Free
Julian Alsop	Bristol R	Swansea C	Undisclosed
John Spencer	QPR	Everton	Loan
Steve Nichol	Sheff Wed	WBA	Loan
David Barnett	Dunfermline	Port Vale	Loan
Paul Beesley	Manchester C	WBA	Loan
Andrew Walker	Sheff Utd	Raith R	Loan

MERSON FOR TOP SPOT?

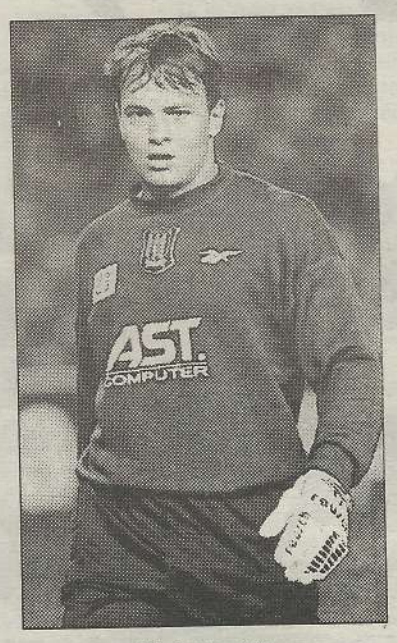
Paul Merson could become the first footballer from outside the top flight to win this season's PFA Players' Player-of-the-Year. Merson, 30 last Friday, has been nominated for the award which was won last year by Alan Shearer.

Other winners since 1974 include Kevin Keegan, Gary Lineker and Liam Brady and this year's award will be presented on April 5.

Kevin Keegan

Merson was voted Young Player-of-the Year in 1988 and if successful would become only the third player to win both awards following Ian Rush and Mark Hughes.

TIE THE AUSSIE BOY DOWN SPORT



Mark Bosnich

Mark Bosnich is being offered a long-term deal to secure his future at Aston Villa.

The Australian goalkeeper has another year to run on his contract, but new Villa manager John Gregory said: "I need to sit down with Mark as quickly as possible to sort out a new deal."

Bosnich has already stated that should Villa be relegated, he wouldn't be there next season, and neither would quite a few other first-team players, because the club "wouldn't be able to afford us."

No doubt that Villans everywhere will be hoping this scenario does not eventuate.

FALKIRK IN MIRE

Falkirk went into provisional liquidation last week — just before their Tennents Scottish Cup semi-final against Hearts.

The First Division club, also bidding for promotion, should be able to fulfil their fixtures to the end of the season but need a new owner to secure long-term safety.

Falkirk are currently $3 million in debt and rising by $60,000 a month, although the club can expect a cash boost from their semi-final.

Chairman George Fulston said: "The appointment of a provisional liquidator is a positive effort to remove immediate pressure from the club's creditors and to take us forward. The club's survival is paramount."

Fulston, also a major shareholder, warned earlier this season that he could not continue bankrolling the club.

Falkirk meet Hearts at Ibrox on April 4, while the Celtic-Rangers semi-final clash is due for Parkhead the following day after Celtic won the draw for choice of venue.

With Hampden Park still being rebuilt (it is not due for completion until next March) the Scottish FA decided on a one-off draw for a 'neutral' venue. The clubs have agreed a 26,000-22,000 ticket split in Celtic's favour.

NO 'HOME' ADVANTAGE FOR CELTIC

The Scottish FA will do everything in their power to ensure Parkhead remains a neutral venue for next month's 'Auld Firm' Scottish Cup semi-final.

The governing body are anxious to nullify any home advantage Celtic might feel after winning the drawing of lots for choice of venue.

SFA spokesman Andy Mitchell has pledged strenuous efforts will be made to ensure Celtic do not feel too much at home, and stressed: "It must be viewed as the SFA hiring Celtic Park for the day, from our perspective it is very much a neutral venue."

He continued: "A fair division of tickets has been agreed amicably between the clubs and both recognise that the SFA will be in charge of the event.

"If you think of the Scotland-Denmark game being played at Ibrox next Wednesday, this will be the same."

Mitchell warned Celtic fans not to expect their usual routine of popular anthems over the tannoy before kick-off and added they will even be denied a familiar voice reading the teams.

He said: 'It will be up to us to put on the pre-match entertainment including choice of music beforehand and the stadium announcer will also be appointed by us.

"It will not be a Celtic home match program and, more importantly, fans will not be in their usual seats. That also goes for the hospitality lounges and boxes all of which we have the right to sell."

Past Great Semi-Final Games

Feb 6, 1892	Celtic*	5	Rangers	3
Feb 24, 1900	Rangers	2	Celtic	2
Mar 3, 1900	Celtic*	4	Rangers	0 (Rply)
Mar 25, 1905	Celtic	0	Rangers	2
Mar 21, 1925	Celtic*	5	Rangers	0
Apr 2, 1960	Celtic	1	Rangers	1
Apr 6, 1960	Celtic	1	Rangers*	4 (Rply)
Mar 31, 1992	Celtic	0	Rangers*	1

* Indicates when these two have met in semi-finals and the team that went on to win the Cup that year (not counting Cup Finals between the two).

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SELECTED MATCHES	INDEX BETTING		FIXED ODDS	
	Supremacy	Total Goals	To Win	Draw
Arsenal Sheffield Wed	0.8 1.1	2.6 2.9	1-2 6-1	9-4
Man United Wimbledon	0.8 1.1	2.6 2.9	1-2 6-1	9-4

Total Goals — An index where you decide whether there will be more or less goals than we predict. If you believe there will be 3 or more goals, you buy at 2.9. If the result is 4-1 (5 goals) you would win 2.1 (5 - 2.9) times your stakes. If you believe there will be 2 or less goals, you sell at 2.6

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European Cup

Juventus Into Semis

A Filippo Inzaghi hat-trick gave Juventus a crushing 4-1 win over Dynamo Kiev in their European Cup quarter-final second-leg match, putting the Italian champions into the semi-finals 5-2 on aggregate.

The 24-year old striker, who saved Juventus from embarrassment when he scored in the 1-1 draw two weeks ago in Turin, scored after 29, 65 and 73 minutes. His strike partner Alessandro Del Piero put the final nail into Kiev's coffin with the fourth goal one minute from time.

Dynamo striker Serhyi Rebrov had made it 1-1 in the 54th minute when he slid home a rebound off Juventus keeper Angelo Peruzzi, giving the home fans a brief glimmer of hope.

But Inzaghi struck back, silencing a sell-out 100,000 crowd.

United Dream In Tatters

Monaco knocked Manchester United out of the European Cup on the away goals rule after holding the English champions to a 1-1 draw with a highly polished performance in the second leg of their quarter-final tie.

David Trezeguet, who missed the goalless first leg two weeks ago, made his presence felt almost immediately with a stunning goal after five minutes.

After United's defence failed to clear, the ball ran into the path of Ali Benarbia who knocked it forward to Trezeguet. The tall striker gave United's reserve goalkeeper Raimond van der Gouw no chance with a powerful 20-metre half volley.

It took United 48 minutes to pull level, the equaliser coming when German referee Hellmut Krug played the advantage after Nicky Butt was hauled down in the box. The ball ran on to David Beckham whose cross was converted by Ole Gunnar Solskjaer — his first goal for almost two months.

Real Join The Party

Two headed goals by Christian Karembeu and Fernando Morientes in an eight-minute spell helped Real Madrid beat Germany's Bayer Leverkusen 3-0 and it carried them through to the semi-finals of the European Cup with a 4-1 aggregate.

The Spanish champions, seeking a record seventh triumph in the European Cup and their first since 1966, were always the better side and had most of the first half chances before Karembeu made the breakthrough four minutes after half-time.

The French international defender rose high above the Leverkusen defence to head home a Clarence Seedorf corner.

First-half substitute Morientes made it 2-0 eight minutes later from a corner on the left by Robert Carlos, giving Leverkusen goalkeeper Dirk Heinen no chance to respond.

Fernando Hierro converted a penalty after 89 minutes to complete a happy night for Real Madrid.

Hierro will miss the semi-final first leg after picking his second yellow card in European competition for a sliding tackle on Leverkusen's Jens Nowotny.

Leverkusen coach Christophe Daum said: "Madrid are probably the best club side in the world at the moment. They are not just talented individuals but play together as a team."

Holders Go Through

An extra-time goal by Stephane Chapuisat earned holders Borussia Dortmund a win over arch-rivals Bayern Munich and a place in the semi-finals of the European Cup.

Swiss striker Chapuisat beat Bayern goalkeeper Oliver Kahn from close range in the 109th minute of a tense quarter-final second-leg tie to give Dortmund a 1-0 victory on aggregate.

Dortmund and Bayern, who have been fighting for German supremacy for years, had never met in Europe before.

The outcome of their much-awaited clash deepened German champions Bayern's gloom. They are nine points behind league leaders Kaiserslautern and stand only an outside chance of retaining their title.

Borussia Dortmund Chapuisat 109p **(Agg: 1-0 to Dortmund aet)**	1	**Bayern Munich**	0
Dynamo Kiev Rebrov 55 **(Agg: 2-5 to Juve)**	1	**Juventus** Inzaghi 29,66,72 Del Piero 88	4
Manchester Utd Solskjaer 53 **(Agg: 1-1. Monaco win on away-goals rule)**	1	**As Monaco** Trezeguet 6	1
Real Madrid Karembeu 58 Morientes 58 Hierro 90 **(Agg: 4-1 to Real)**	3	**Bayer Leverkusen**	0

Cup Winners' Cup

Goals from Sinclair, Di Matteo and Zola took the London club Chelsea through after Sinclair equalised in the 29th minute, following Finidi George magnificently firing Betis into the lead.

Sinclair was up in support of his attack when Chelsea won a free-kick just outside the area.

Captain Alexis began the move that led to Betis' opening goal with a clever ball to Alfonso — currently the Spanish national team centre forward.

He played the ball through and George moved menacingly on to the chance and swept the ball instantly past De Goey from the edge of the penalty area.

As Chelsea slowly took control of the game, Di Matteo swung in a shot that Prats somehow saved with his legs.

Betis conceded a second goal after 49 minutes and it was brilliantly executed by Di Matteo. He broke up a Spanish attack in midfield, sprinted forward and, with goalkeeper Prats off his line, sidefooted it past him and into the empty net.

Zola added Chelsea's third with a superb strike in the last minute.

QUARTER-FINAL (second-leg) RESULTS

Chelsea Sinclair 30 Di Matteo 51 Zola 90 **(Agg: 5-2 to Chelsea)**	3	**Real Betis** George 21	1
Lokomotiv Moscow Kharlachev 55 Chugainov 90 **(Agg: 2-1 to Lokomotiv)**	2	**Aek Athens** Kopitsis 68p	1
Stuttgart Balakov 10, 20 **(Agg: 3-1 to Stuttgart)**	2	**Slavia Prague**	0
Vicenza Luiso 5, Firmani 24 Mendez 38, Ambrosetti 43 Zauli 48 **(Agg: 9-1 to Vicenza)**	5	**Roda**	0

UEFA Cup

Aston Villa were dealt a devastating blow by Jose Luis Caminero in their attempt to reach the UEFA Cup semi-finals (for the first time in their history) as the Spanish veteran deflated the English side with an early goal.

Caminero profited as Mark Bosnich tried desperately to cut out a magnificent 35-yard through-ball from Kiko by dashing from his line, but his plunge at the feet of Carlos Aguilera caused the ball to spin to Caminero, who delivered the strike that put Atletico Madrid two goals ahead on aggregate and provided the away-goal that left Villa needing to score three times to progress.

In his last throw of the dice, Villa coach John Gregory replaced Milosevic and the disappointing Draper with Collymore and Fernando Nelson and Collymore, who had not played since being forced off with an ankle injury in the first-leg, helped in the construction of a move which hinted at the amazing revival Villa were about to mount. His pass to Lee Hendrie was diverted on to Alan Wright, whose cross was headed against the bar by Yorke.

Taylor gave his side hope by crashing home the equaliser on the night after 72 minutes with a low right-foot shot after Hendrie's cross had been touched back by Joachim.

And it was Hendrie who provided the cross for Villa's second goal just two minutes later, finding Collymore, who rounded his marker on the corner of the area and smashed a terrific effort in off the underside of the bar. Others to go through were Lazio, Inter and Ajax.

Aston Villa Taylor 72, Collymore 74	2	**Atletico Madrid** Caminero 28	1
(Agg: 2-2. Atletico win on away-goals rule)			
Auxerre Guivarc'h 39, 80	2	**Lazio** Mancini 7p, Gottardi 12	2 **(Agg: 2-3)**
Schalke 04 Goossens 90	1	**Inter Milan** West 91	1 **(aet. Agg: 1-2)**
Spartak Moscow Shirko 86	1	**Ajax**	0 **(Agg: 4-1)**

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SOUTH AMERICA

— Compiled by Mario Etchart —

LIBERTADORES CUP LATEST

Penarol Thrash National

Uruguayan champion Penarol thrashed arch-rival Nacional 4-1 in the local derby Group 4 game at Montevideo's historic Centenario stadium, in front of 35,000 spectators.

Penarol dominated and deserved the victory over a frustrated rival who couldn't match the skills and the tactical display of the winner.

Uruguayan international Luis Romero connected with a header for a perfect cross from veteran forward Carlos Aguilera and opened the score in the ninth minute.

In the 17th minute Nacional's Ruben Sosa was sent-off for verbal abuse and seven minutes later striker Walter Pandiani added the second for Penarol after a brilliant combination with midfielder Nicolas Rotundo.

In the 32nd minute Nacional were reduced to nine men after the local referee sent-off Colombian striker Jorge Ramirez, who clashed with Penarol's defender Nelson Olveira (it left the latter with a broken leg).

Nacional pulled one goal back in the 42nd minute through an excellent individual effort from midfielder Lemos.

But the Uruguayan champion took control again and in the 14th minute of the second-half Jose Herrera netted the third for Penarol with a header, and striker Walter Pandiani scored the fourth in the 30th minute.

Draw in Bolivian Derby

Bolivian champion Bolivar and Oriente Petrolero drew 1-1 in the local derby in Group 4, played at Petrolero's Santa Cruz stadium.

The local outfit needed a victory to qualify to the second round, after Penarol beat Nacional in Montevideo and left the loser without a win in four matches.

Bolivar and Penarol have already qualified for the second round, and the third spot will be decided between Oriente Petrolero and Nacional. The Bolivian runner-up needs just a draw, away, against Penarol or Nacional, to go through to the second-round, while Nacional must win both matches against the Bolivian teams to have a chance of qualifying.

Petrolero went 1-0 ahead in the 14th minute when Brazilian striker Edu Monteiro in a great individual effort scored the opener.

Another Brazilian, Osvaldinho, had the chance to secure Petrolero's victory in the 24th minute but his penalty kick was saved by Bolivar's goalkeeper Rojas.

The Bolivian champion equalised in the 39th minute when striker Sergio Joao took advantage of a bad clearance from a local defender and beat goalkeeper Leo Fernandez with a short drive.

America beat Bucaramanga

Colombian champion America of Cali scored a very important 1-0 victory, away, against compatriot Bucaramanga, in the local derby and took a big step towards the second round.

The only goal of the match was scored by striker James Cardona with a well taken free-kick from 25 metres in the 48th minute.

Meanwhile, in the altitude of Quito, the Ecuadorean derby between the local champion Barcelona and Deportivo Quito, ended in a 1-1 draw.

Deportivo went 1-0 ahead in the 28th minute when Robert Burbano connected with a header from a cross from the left, but Barcelona equalised through striker Augustin Delgado who leveled the scoreline with a powerful drive from 20 metres in the 70th minute.

With this result, Barcelona is practically in the second round while Deportivo Quito will have to win at least one game away, in Colombia, against Bucaramanga or America.

Colon in dramatic victory

Newcomers Colon of Santa Fe of Argentina scored a dramatic 1-0 victory over Peruvian champion Alianza Lima and they lead Group 5 with six points, two more than Argentine champion River Plate and Alianza.

Colon's young striker Gustavo Sandoval scored the only goal of the match in the 84th minute after a solo effort.

Alianza finished with ten men after the referee sent-off striker Dacid Chavez for elbowing Colon's Uruguayan international defender Hector Rodriguez in the 67th minute.

The Argentine club qualified for the Libertadores Cup, for the first time in its history after knocking out seven times champion Independiente in a play-off.

Colo Colo go through

Chilean champion, Colo Colo, qualified for the second round after a solid and deserved 2-0 victory over Universidad Catolica, in the local derby played at Santiago's National stadium, in front of 55,000 spectators in a Group 3 match.

Inspired Colo Colo striker Hector Tapia netted both goals in the 18th and 28th minutes. The first one after an excellent combination with Argentine midfielder Marcelo Barticciotto, and the second with a perfect header, beating the static Catolica defenders.

In Asuncion, Paraguayan champion Olimpia defeated runner-up Cerro Porteno 2-1.

With its victory, Olimpia, who won the Libertadores Cup twice, in 1979 and 1990 qualified for the second round.

Olimpia has ten points, followed by Colo Colo with seven, Cerro Porteno with four, and Catolica with only one point.

The Paraguayan runner-up went 1-0 ahead in the 38th minute when Olimpia's defender Jorge Valdez brought down Cerro's striker Paredes inside the box, and midfielder Hugo Ovelar scored from the spot.

In the 44th minute, Paraguayan referee Luis Grance sent-off Olimpia's striker Mauro Caballero.

Cerro Porteno, with one extra player, started the second-half in control, but in a counter-attack Olimpia found the equaliser when midfielder Carlos Paredes connected with a header from a cross from Mauricio Perez in the 56th.

In the 72nd minute, against the run of play, striker Luis Monzon scored Olimpia's second goal, securing a berth in the second round.

MERCONORTE CUP

The Merconorte Cup, a new competition organised by the South American Football Confederation in conjunction with CONCACAF, including clubs from North Central and South America, will kick off next September.

Sixteen teams, divided in four groups, will participate in the first edition of the new tournament, and the winner will play against the champion of the Mercosur Cup (including teams from Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, Chile and Bolivia).

The winners of the four groups of the Merconorte Cup will qualify for the semi-finals applying the system of home-and-away for the matches.

The groups are:

GROUP A

Guadalajara (Mexico), Deportivo Cali or America (Colombia), Emelec (Ecuador) and Sporting Cristal (Peru).

GROUP B

America (Mexico), Atletico Nacional (Colombia), Nacional (Ecuador) and Universitario de Deportes (Peru).

GROUP C

DC United (USA), Millonarios (Colombia), Barcelona (Ecuador) and Alianza Lima (Peru).

GROUP D

Los Angeles Galaxy (USA), Cruz Azul (Mexico), The Strongest (Bolivia) and Caracas (Venezuela)

NEWS IN BRIEF...

BRAZIL/GERMANY FRIENDLY

Four time world champion Brazil will play Germany in a friendly international in Germany on the 25 March (tomorrow Wed).

Brazilian coach Mario Zagallo has named 22 players (12 play for foreign clubs and 10 from the domestic competition), with the aim of defining the squad for the 1998 World Cup.

Among the 22 players Zagallo recalled striker Bebeto (Botafogo), who wasn't considered in previous build-up matches and international competitions like the Confederations Cup and the CONCACAF Gold Cup. But the surprise is the inclusions of Paris Saint Germain star midfielder Rai and Sao Paulo's defender Ze Carlos.

The squad is:

GOALKEEPERS: Taffarel (Atletico Mineiro) and Dida (Cruzeiro).

DEFENDERS: Roberto Carlos (Real Madrid, Spain), Cafu and Aldair (AC Roma, Italy), Ze Carlos (Sao Paulo), Junior Baiano and Ze Roberto (Flamengo) and Gonzalves (Botafogo).

MIDFIELDERS: Leonardo (AC Milan, Italy), Rai (Paris Saint Germain, France), Doriva (Porto, Portugal), Ze Elias (Internazionale), Dunga (Jubilo Iwata, Japan), Cesar Sampaio (Yokohama Flugels, Japan), Rivaldo (Barcelona, Spain) and Denilson (Sao Paulo).

STRIKERS: Ronaldo (Inter Milan, Italy), Elber (Bayern Munich, Germany), Romario (Flamengo), and Bebeto (Botafogo).

FAREWELL FOR HUGO SANCHEZ

Mexico and Paraguay drew 1-1 in a friendly international played at Mexico City's Azteca stadium front of 100,000 spectators. It was for former Mexican international striker Hugo Sanchez, who had an unforgetable farewell.

Paraguayan striker Miguel Angel Benitez opened the score in the 62nd minute, but Gabriel De Anda equalised for the Mexicans six minutes later.

ROZENTAL OUT OF FRANCE 98

The dream of Glasgow Rangers' Chilean striker Sebastian Rozental of playing along Marcelo Salas and Ivan Zamorano for Chile in the 1998 World Cup was shattered when Rangers officials announced that the brilliant forward will have another operation on his injured right knee, the third in one year.

Rozental, 22, was transferred from Chilean glamour club Universidad Catolica to the Scottish club in 1996 for six million dollars.

Chilean coach, Nelson Acosta, during his visit to Australia told ABSW that he will wait for Rozental because he was the perfect replacement for Salas or Zamorano. Rozental played against England B for only 45 minutes and Acosta was satisfied with the striker's performance.

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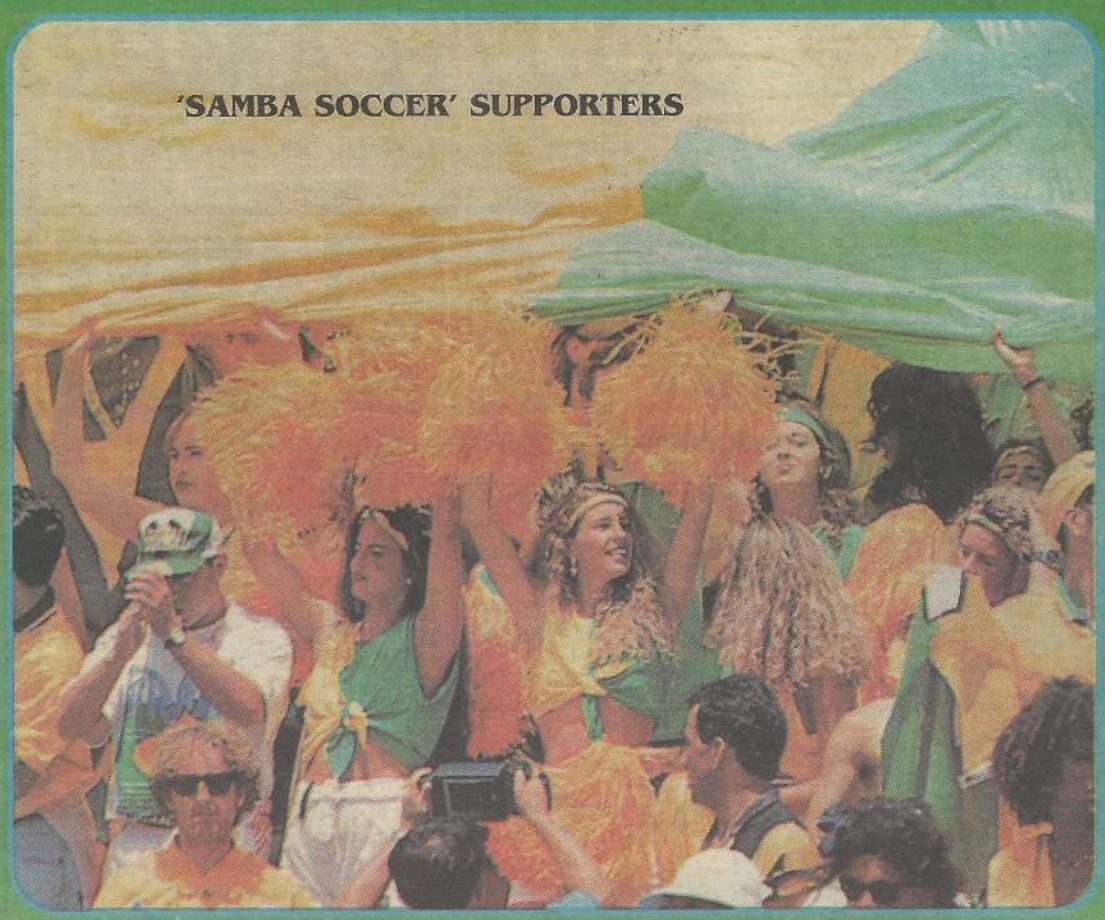
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